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By - W. Harrison Ainsworth

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AINSWORTH'S MAGAZINE.

THE LANCASHIRE WITCHES;

A Romance of Pendle Forest

BY W HARRISON AINSWORTH, ESQ

INTRODUCTION—THE LAST ABBOT OF WHALLEY

CHAPTER I

THE BEACON ON PENDLE HILL

THERE were eight watchers by the beacon on Pendle Hill in Lancashire. Two were stationed on either side of the north-eastern extremity of the mountain. One looked over the castled heights of Clithero, the woody eminences of Bowland, the black ridges of Thornley, the broad moors of Bleasdale, the Trough of Bolland and Wolf Crag, and even brought within his ken the black fells overhanging Lancaster. The other tracked the stream called Pendle Water, almost from its source amid the neighbouring hills, and followed its windings through the leafless forest until it united its waters to those of the Calder, and swept on in swifter and clearer current to wash the base of Whalley Abbey. But the watchers survey did not stop here. Noting the sharp spire of Burnley Church, relieved against the rounded masses of timber constituting Townley Park, as well as the entrance of the gloomy mountain gorge, known as the Grange of Cliviger, his far-reaching gaze passed over Todmorden, and settled upon the distant summits of Blackstone Edge.

Diary was the prospect on all sides. Black moor, bleak fell, straggling forest, intersected with sullen streams as black as ink, with here and there a small tarn, or moss-pool, with waters of the same hue—these constituted the chief features of the scene. The whole district was barren, and thinly populated. Of towns only Clithero, Colne, and Burnley—the latter little more than a village—were in view. In the valleys there were a few hamlets and scattered cottages, and on the uplands an occasional “booth,” as the hut of the herdsman was termed, but of more important mansions, there were only six, as Merlay, Twistleton, Alcancoats, Sax-

feld, Ightanhill, and Gawthorpe. The "vaccaries" for the cattle, of which the herdsmen had the care, and the "lawnds," or parks within the forest, appertaining to some of the halls before mentioned, offered the only evidences of cultivation. All else was heathy waste, morass, and wood.

Still, in the eye of the sportsman—and the Lancashire gentlemen of the sixteenth century were keen lovers of sport—the country had a strong interest. Pendle Forest abounded with game. Grouse, plover, and bittern were found upon its moors, woodcock and snipe on its marshes, wild-duck, teal, and widgeon upon its pools. In its chases ranged herds of deer, protected by the terrible forest-laws, then in full force, and the hardier huntsman might follow the wolf to his lair in the mountains, might spear the boar in the oaken glades, or the otter on the river's brink, might unearth the badger or the fox, or smite the fierce cat-a-mountain with a quarrel from his bow. A nobler victim sometimes, also, awaited him in the shape of a wild mountain bull, a denizen of the forest, and a remnant of the herds that had once browsed upon the hills, but which had almost all been captured, and removed to stock the park of the Abbot of Whalley. The streams and pools were full of fish, the stately heron frequented the meres, and on the craggy heights built the kite, the falcon, and the kingly eagle.

There were eight watchers by the beacon. Two stood apart from the others, looking to the right and the left of the hill. Both were armed with swords and arquebuses, and wore steel caps and coats of buff. Their sleeves were embroidered with the five wounds of Christ, encircling the name of Jesus—the badge of the Pilgrimage of Grace. Between them, on the verge of the mountain, was planted a great banner, displaying a silver cross, the chalice, and the Host, together with an ecclesiastical figure, ~~figuring~~ wearing a helmet instead of a mitre, and holding a sword in place of a crosier, with the uncrossed hand pointing to the two towers of a monastic structure, as if to intimate that he was armed for its defence. This figure, as the device beneath it showed, represented John Paslew, Abbot of Whalley, or, as he styled himself in his military capacity, Earl of Poverty.

There were eight watchers by the beacon. Two have been described. Of the other six, two were stout herdsmen carrying crooks, and holding a couple of mules, and a richly-caparisoned war-horse by the bridle. Near them stood a broad-shouldered, athletic young man, with the fresh complexion, curling brown hair, light eyes, and open Saxon countenance best seen in his native county of Lancaster. He wore a Lincoln-green tunic, with a bugle suspended from the shoulder by a silken cord, and a silver plate engraved with the three lilies, the ensign of the Abbot of Whalley, hung by a chain from his neck. A hunting-knife was in his girdle, and an eagle's plume in his cap, and he leaned upon the butt-end of a cross-bow, regarding three persons who stood together by a peat fire, on the sheltered side of the beacon. Two of these were elderly men, in the white gowns and scapularies of Cistercian monks, doubtless from Whalley, as the abbey belonged to that order. The third and last, and evidently their superior, was a tall man in a riding dress, wrapped in a long mantle of black velvet, trimmed with minever, and displaying the same badges as those upon the sleeves of the sentinels, only wrought in richer material. His features were strongly marked and stern, and bore trace of age, but his eye was bright, and his carriage erect and dignified.

The beacon, near which the watchers stood, consisted of a vast pile of logs of timber, heaped upon a circular range of stones, with openings to admit air, and having the centre filled with fagots, and other quickly combustible materials. Torches were placed near at hand, so that the pile could be lighted on the instant.

The watch was held one afternoon at the latter end of November, 1536. In that year had arisen a formidable rebellion in the northern counties of England, the members of which, while engaging to respect the person of the king, Henry VIII, and his issue, bound themselves by solemn oath to accomplish the restoration of Papal supremacy throughout the realm, and the restitution of religious establishments and lands to their late ejected possessors. They bound themselves, also, to punish the enemies of the Romish Church and suppress heresy. From its religious character, the insurrection assumed the name of the Pilgrimage of Grace, and numbered among its adherents all who had not embraced the new doctrines in Yorkshire and Lancashire. That such an outbreak should occur on the suppression of the monasteries was not marvellous. The desecration and spoliation of so many sacred structures—the destruction of shrines and images long regarded with veneration—the ejection of so many ecclesiastics, renowned for hospitality and revered for piety and learning—the violence and rapacity of the commissioners appointed by the Vicar-General Cromwell to carry out these severe measures—all these outrages were regarded by the people with abhorrence, and disposed them to aid the sufferers in resistance. As yet the wealthier monasteries in the north had been spared, and it was to preserve them from the greedy hands of the visitors, Doctors Lee and Layton, that the insurrection had been undertaken. A simultaneous rising took place in Lincolnshire, headed by Makarel, Abbot of Barlings, but it was speedily quelled by the vigour and skill of the Duke of Suffolk, and its leader executed. But the northern outbreak was better organised, and of greater force, for it now numbered thirty thousand men, under the command of a skilful and resolute leader named Robert Aske.

As may be supposed, the priesthood were main movers in a revolt, having their especial benefit for its aim, and many of them, following the example of the Abbot of Barlings, clothed themselves in steel instead of woollen garments, and girded on the sword and the breast-plate for the redress of their grievances and the maintenance of their rights. Amongst these were the Abbots of Jervaux, Furness, Fountains, Rievaulx, and Salley, and, lastly, the Abbot of Whalley, before mentioned, a fiery and energetic prelate, who had ever been constant and determined in his opposition to the aggressive measures of the king. Such was the Pilgrimage of Grace, such its design, and such its supporters.

Several large towns had already fallen into the hands of the insurgents. York, Hull, and Pontefract had yielded, Skipton Castle was besieged, and defended by the Earl of Cumberland, and battle was offered to the Duke of Norfolk and the Earl of Shrewsbury, who headed the king's forces at Doncaster. But the object of the Royalist leaders was to temporise, and an armistice was offered to the rebels and accepted. Terms were next proposed and debated.

During the continuance of this armistice all hostilities ceased, but beacons were reared upon the mountains, and their fires were to be taken as a new summons to arms. This signal the eight watchers expected.

Though late in November, the day had been unusually fine, and, in consequence, the whole hilly ranges around were clearly discernible, but now the shades of evening were fast drawing on

"Night is approaching," cried the tall man in the velvet mantle, impatiently, "and still the signal comes not. Wherefore this delay? Can Norfolk have accepted our conditions? Impossible. The last messenger from our camp at Scawsby Lees brought word that the duke's sole terms would be the king's pardon to the whole insurgent army, provided they at once dispersed—except ten persons, six named and four unnamed."

"And were you amongst those named, lord abbot?" demanded one of the monks

"John Paslew, Abbot of Whalley, it was said, headed the list," replied the other, with a bitter smile. "Next came William Trafford, Abbot of Salley. Next Adam Sudbury, Abbot of Jervaux. Then our leader, Robert Aske. Then John Eastgate, Monk of Whalley——"

"How, lord abbot?" exclaimed the monk. "Was my name mentioned?"

"It was," rejoined the abbot. "And that of William Haydocke, also Monk of Whalley, closed the list."

"The unrelenting tyrant," muttered the other monk. "But these terms could not be accepted."

"Assuredly not," replied Paslew, "they were rejected with scorn. But the negotiations were continued by Sir Ralph Ellerker and Sir Robert Bowas, who were to claim on our part a free pardon for all, the establishment of a parliament and courts of justice at York, the restoration of the Princess Mary to the succession, the Pope to his jurisdiction and our brethren to their houses. But such conditions will never be granted. With my consent no armistice should have been agreed to. We are sure to lose by the delay. But I was overruled by the Archbishop of York and the Lord Darcy. Their voices prevailed against the Abbot of Whalley—or, if it please you, the Earl of Poverty."

"It is the assumption of that derisive title which has drawn upon you the full force of the king's resentment, lord abbot," observed Father Eastgate.

"It may be," replied the abbot. "I took it in mockery of Cromwell and the ecclesiastical commissioners, and I rejoice that they have felt the sting. The Abbot of Barlings called himself Captain Cobbler because, as he affirmed, the state wanted mending like old shoon. And is not my title equally well chosen? Is not the church smitten with poverty? Have not ten thousand of our brethren been driven from their homes to beg or to starve? Have not the houseless poor whom we fed at our gates, and lodged within our wards, gone away hungry and without rest? Have not the sick whom we would have relieved died untended by the hedge-side? I am the head of the poor in Lancashire, the redresser of their grievances, and therefore I style myself Earl of Poverty. Have I not done well?"

"You have, lord abbot," replied Father Eastgate.

"Poverty will not alone be the fate of the church, but of the whole realm, if the rapacious designs of the monarch and his heretical counsellors are carried forth," pursued the abbot. "Cromwell, Audeley, and Rich, have wisely ordained that no infant shall be baptised without tribute to the king, that no man who owns not above twenty pounds a year shall consume wheaten bread, or eat the flesh of fowl or swine without tribute, and that all ploughed land shall pay tribute likewise. Thus the church

is to be beggared, the poor plundered, and all men burthened, to fatten the king, and fill his exchequer "

" This must be a jest," observed Father Haydocke

" It is a jest no man laughs at," rejoined the abbot, sternly, " any more than the king's counsellors will laugh at the Earl of Poverty, whose title they themselves have created But wherefore comes not the signal? Can aught have gone wrong? I will not think it The whole country, from the Tweed to the Humber, and from the Lune to the Mersey, is ours, and if we but hold together, our cause must prevail "

" Yet we have many and powerful enemies," observed Father Eastgate, " and the king, it is said, hath sworn never to make terms with us Tidings were brought to the abbey this morning that the Earl of Derby is assembling forces at Preston, to march upon us "

" We will give him a warm reception if he comes," replied Paslew, fiercely " He will find that our walls have not been kernelled and embattled by license of good King Edward the Third for nothing, and that our brethren can fight as well as their predecessors fought in the time of Abbot Holden, when they took tithe by force from Sir Christopher Parsons of Slaydburn The abbey is strong, and right well defended, and we need not fear a surprise But it grows dark fast, and yet no signal comes "

" Perchance the waters of the Don have again arisen, so as to prevent the ~~army~~ from fording the stream," observed Father Haydocke, " or it may be that some disaster hath befallen our leader "

" Nay, I will not believe the latter," said the abbot, " Robert Aske is chosen by Heaven to be our deliverer It has been prophesied that a ' worm with one eye ' shall work the redemption of the fallen faith, and you know that Robert Aske hath been deprived of his left ~~eye~~ by an arrow "

" Therefore it is," observed Father Eastgate, " that the Pilgrims of Grace chant the following ditty —

North shall come an Aske with one eye,
He shall be chief of 'he company—
Chief of the northern chivalry

" What more? " demanded the abbot, seeing that the monk appeared to hesitate

" Nay, I know not whether the rest of the rhymes may please you, lord abbot," replied Father Eastgate

" Let me hear them and I will judge," said Paslew

Thus urged, the monk went on —

One shall sit at a solemn feast,
Half warrior, half priest,
The greatest there shall be the least

" The last verse," observed the monk, " has been added to the ditty by Nicholas Demduke I heard him sing it the other day at the abbey gate "

" What! Nicholas Demduke of Worston? " cried the abbot, " he whose wife is a witch? "

" The same," replied Eastgate

" Heo be so cawnted, sure eno'," remarked the forester, who had been listening attentively to their discourse, and who now stepped forward,

"boh dunna yo' think it Beleemy, lort abbut, Bess Demdike's too yunk an too protty for a witch"

"Thou art bewitched by her thyself, Cuthbert," said the abbot, angrily "I shall impose a penance upon thee to free thee from the evil influence Thou must recite twenty paternosters daily, fasting, for one month, and afterwards perform a pilgrimage to the shrine of our Lady of Gilsland Bess Demdike is an approved and notorious witch, and hath been seen by credible witnesses attending a devil's sabbath on this very hill—Heaven shield us! It is therefore that I have placed her and her husband under the ban of the church pronounced sentence of excommunication against them, and commanded all my clergy to refuse baptism to their infant daughter, newly born"

"Wea's me! ey knoas 't reet weel, lort abbut," replied Ashbead, "and Bess tiks t' sentence sore ta 'ert!"

"Then let her amend her ways, or heavier punishment will befall her," cried Paslew, severely "'*Sortilegium non patieris vivere*, saith the Levitical law If she be convicted she shall die the death That she is comely I admit, but it is the comeliness of a child of sin Dost thou know the man with whom she is wedded—or supposed to be wedded—for I have seen no proof of the marriage? He is a stranger here"

"Ey knoas neawt abowt him, lort abbut, cept that he cum to Pendle a twalmonth agoa," replied Ashbead, "boh ey knoas fu' weel that t'cawtumbling felly robt me o' t' prottiest lass i' aw Lonkyshmar—ugh, or i' aw Englonshmar, fo' t' matter o' that"

"What manner of man is he?" inquired the abbot

"Oh, he's a feaw teyke—a varra feaw teyke," replied Ashbead, "wi a feace as black as a boggart, sooty shoiny hewr loike a mowdy warp, an oen loike a stanniel Boh for running, rostling, an throwing t' stoan he'n no match i' this keawntry Fy n triet him at aw three gam's, so ey can speak For t' most part he'n a big, black bandyhewit wi' him, and, by th' Mess, ey canna help thinkin' he meys free sumtoimes wi' yoi lortship's bucks"

"Ha! this must be looked to," cried the abbot "You say you know not whence he comes? 'Tis strange"

"T' missmannert carl ll boide naw questionin', odd rottle him!" replied Ashbead "He awnsurs wi' a gibe, or a thwack o' his staff When ey last seet him, he threatened t' raddle me boocans weel, boh ey soocan lowert him a peg"

"We will find a way of making him speak," said the abbot

"He can speak, and right well if he pleases," remarked Father Eastgate, "for though ordinarily silent and sullen enough, yet when he doth talk, it is not like one of the hinds with whom he consorts, but in good set phrase, and his bearing is as bold as that of one who hath seen service in the field"

"My curiosity is aroused," said the abbot "I must see him"

"Noa sooner said than done," cried Ashbead, "for be t' Lord Harry, ey see him standing be yon moss poo' o' top t' hill, though how he'n gotten theer t' dule ownny knoas"

And he pointed out a tall, dark figure standing near a little pool on the summit of the mountain, about a hundred yards from them

"Talk of ill, and ill cometh," observed Father Haydocke, "And see the wizard hath a black hound with him It may be his wife, in that likeness"

"Naw, ey knoas t' hount reet weel, Feyther Haydocke," replied the forester, "it's a Saint Hubert, an a rare un fo' fox or badgert Odds loife, feyther, whoy that's t' black bandyhwit I war speaking on"

"I like not the appearance of the knave at this juncture," said the abbot, "yet I wish to confront him, and charge him with his misde-meanours

"Hark, he sings," cried Father Haydocke And as he spoke, a voice was heard, chanting—

One shall sit at a solemn feast,
Half warrior, half priest,
The greatest there shall be the least

"The very ditty I heard," cried Father Eastgate, 'but list, he has more of it' And the voice resumed—

He shall be rich, yet poor as me,
Abbot, and Earl of Poverty
Monk and soldier, rich and poor,
He shall be hang'd at his own door

Loud dense laughter followed the song

"By our Lady of Whalley, the knave is mocking us," cried the abbot, "send a bolt to silence him, Cuthbert"

The forester instantly bent his bow, and a quarrel whistled off in the direction of the singer, but whether his aim were not truly taken, or he meant not to hit the mark, it is certain that Demdike remained untouched The reputed wizard laughed aloud, took off his felt cap in acknowledgment, and marched deliberately down the side of the hill

"Thou art not wont to miss thy aim, Cuthbert," cried the abbot, with a look of displeasure "Take good heed thou producest this scurril knave before me, when these troublous times are over But what is this?—he stops—ha! he is practising his devilries on the mountain's side."

It would seem that the abbot had good warrant for what he said, as Demdike, having pruned at a broad green patch on the hill side, was now busied in tracing a circle round it with his staff He then spoke aloud, some words, which the superstitious beholders construed into an incantation, and after tracing the circle once again, and casting some tufts of dry heather, which he plucked from an adjoining hillock, on three particular spots, he ran quickly downwards, followed by his hound, and leaping a stone wall, surrounding a little orchard, at the foot of the hill, disappeared from view

"Go and see what he hath done," cried the abbot to the forester, "for I like it not"

Ashbead instantly obeyed, and on reaching the green spot in question, shouted out that he could discern nothing, but presently added, as he moved about, that the turf heaved like a sway-bed beneath his feet, and he thought—to use his own phraseology—would "brast" The abbot then commanded him to go down to the orchard below, and if he could find Demdike, to bring him to him instantly The forester did as he was bidden, ran down the hill, and, leaping the orchard-wall as the other had done, was lost to sight

Ere long, it became quite dark, and as Ashbead did not re-appear, the abbot gave vent to his impatience and uneasiness, and was proposing to send one of the herdsmen in search of him, when his attention was sud-

denly diverted by a loud shout from one of the sentinels, and a fire was seen on a distant hill on the right

"The signal! the signal!" cried Paslew, joyfully "Kindle a torch!—quick, quick!"

And as he spoke, he seized a brand and plunged it into the peat fire, while his example was followed by the two monks

"It is the beacon on Blackstone Edge," cried the abbot, "and look! a second blazes over the Grange of Cliviger—another on Ightenhill—another on Boulsworth Hill—and the last on the neighbouring heights of Padiham Our own comes next May it light the enemies of our holy church to perdition!"

With this, he applied the burning brand to the combustible matter of the beacon The monks did the same, and in an instant a tall, pointed flame, rose up from a thick cloud of smoke Ere another minute had elapsed, similar fires shot up to the right and the left, on the high lands of Trawden Forest, on the jagged points of Foulridge, on the summit of Cowling Hill, and so on to Skipton Other fires again blazed on the towers of Clithero, on Longridge and Ribchester, on the woody eminences of Bowland, on Wolf Crag, and on fell and scar all the way to Lancaster It seemed the work of enchantment, so suddenly and so strangely did the fires shoot forth As the beacon-flame increased, it lighted up the whole of the extensive table-land on the summit of Pendle Hill, and a long, lurid streak fell on the darkling moss-pool near which the wizard had stood But when it attained its utmost height, it revealed the depths of the forest below, and a red reflection, here and there, marked the course of Pendle Water The excitement of the abbot and his companions momentarily increased, and the sentinels shouted as each new beacon was lighted At last, almost every hill had its watch-fire, and so extraordinary was the spectacle, that it seemed as if weird beings were abroad, and holding their revels on the heights

Then it was that the abbot, mounting his steed, called out to the monks—"Holy fathers, you will follow to the abbey as you may I shall ride fleetly on, and despatch two hundred archers to Huddersfield and Wakefield The Abbots of Salley and Jervaux, with the Prior of Burlington, will be with me at midnight, and at day-break we shall march our forces to join the main army Heaven be with you!"

"Stay!" cried a harsh, imperious voice "Stay!"

And, to his surprise, the abbot beheld Nicholas Demdike standing before him The aspect of the wizard was dark and forbidding, and seen by the beacon light, his savage features, blazing eyes, tall gaunt frame, and fantastic garb, made him look like something unearthly Flung his staff over his shoulder, he slowly approached, with his black hound following close by at his heels

"I have a caution to give you, lord abbot," he said, "hear me speak before you set out for the abbey, or ill will befall you"

"Ill *will* befall me if I listen to thee, thou wicked churl," cried the abbot "What hast thou done with Cuthbert Ashbead?"

"I have seen nothing of him since he sent a bolt after me at your bidding, lord abbot," replied Demdike.

"Beware, lest any harm come to him, or thou wilt rue it," cried Paslew "But I have no time to waste on thee Farewell, fathers

High mass will be said in the convent-church before we set out on the expedition to-morrow morning. You will both attend it."

"You will never set out upon the expedition, lord abbot," cried Demdike, planting his staff so suddenly into the ground before the horse's head, that the animal reared and nearly threw his rider.

"How now, fellow, what mean you?" cried the abbot, furiously.

"To warn you," replied Demdike.

"Stand aside," cried the abbot, spurring his steed, "or I will trample you beneath my horse's feet."

"I might let you ride to your own doom," rejoined Demdike, with a scornful laugh, as he seized the abbot's bridle, "but you shall hear me. I tell you, you will never go forth on this expedition. I tell you that, ere to-morrow, Whalley Abbey will have passed for ever from your possession, and that if you go thither again, your life will be forfeited. Now will you listen to me?"

"I am wrong in doing so," cried the abbot, who could not, however, repress some feelings of misgiving at this alarming address. "Speak, what would you say?"

"Come out of ear-shot of the others, and I will tell you," replied Demdike. And he led the abbot's horse to some distance further on the hill.

"Your cause will fail, lord abbot," he then said. "Nay, it is lost already."

"I lost!" cried the abbot, out of all patience. "Lost! Look around. Twenty fires are in sight—ay, thirty, and every fire thou seest will summon a hundred men at the least to arms. Before an hour, five hundred men will be gathered before the gates of Whalley Abbey."

"True," replied Demdike, "but they will not own the Earl of Poverty for their leader."

"What leader will they own, then?" demanded the abbot, scornfully.

"The Earl of Derby," replied Demdike. "He is on his way thither with Lord Mounteagle, from Preston."

"Ha!" exclaimed Paslew, "let me go meet them, then. But thou triflest with me, fellow. Thou canst know nothing of this. Whence gotst thou thine information?"

"Heed it not," replied the other, "thou wilt find it correct. I tell thee, proud abbot, that this grand scheme of thine, and of thy fellows, for the restitution of the Catholic Church has failed—utterly failed."

"I tell thee thou liest, false knave," cried the abbot, striking him on the hand with his scourge. "Quit thy hold, and let me go."

"Not till I have done," replied Demdike, maintaining his grasp. "Well hast thou styled thyself Earl of Poverty, for thou art poor and miserable enough. Abbot of Whalley thou art no longer. Thy possessions will be taken from thee, and if thou returnest thy life also will be taken. If thou fleest, a price will be set upon thy head. I alone can save thee, and I will do so on one condition."

"Condition! make conditions with thee, bond-slave of Satan!" cried the abbot, gnashing his teeth. "I reproach myself that I have listened to thee so long. Stand aside, or I will strike thee dead."

"You are wholly in my power," cried Demdike, with a disdainful laugh. And as he spoke, he pressed the large, sharp bit against the charger's mouth, and backed him quickly to the very edge of the hill, the

sides of which here sloped precipitously down The abbot would have uttered a cry, but surprise and terror kept him silent

"Were it my desire to injure you, I could cast you down the mountain-side to certain death," pursued Demdike "But I have no such wish On the contrary, I will serve you, as I have said, on one condition "

"Thy condition would imperil my soul," said the abbot, full of wrath and alarm Thou seekest in vain to terrify me into compliance *Vade retro Sathanas* ' I defy thee and all thy works "

Demdike laughed scornfully

"The thunders of the church do not frighten me," he cried "But look," he added, 'you doubted my word when I told you the rising was at an end The beacon fires on Boulsworth Hill and on the Grange of Cliviger are extinguished, that on Padiham Heights is expiring—nay, it is out, and ere many minutes all these mountain watch-fires will have disappeared like lamps at the close of a feast "

"By our Lady, it is so," cried the abbot, in increasing terror "What new jugglery is this?"

"It is no jugglery, I tell you," replied the other "The waters of the Don have again arisen, the insurgents have accepted the king's pardon, have deserted their leaders, and dispersed There will be no rising to-night or on the morrow The Abbots of Jervaux and Salley will strive to capitulate, but in vain The Pilgrimage of Grace is ended The stake for which thou playedst is lost Thirty years hast thou governed here, but thy rule is over Seventeen abbots have there been of Whalley—the last thou—but there shall be none more "

"It must be the demon in person that speaks thus to me," cried the abbot, his hair bristling on his head, and a cold perspiration bursting from his pores

"No matter who I am," replied the other, "I have said I will aid thee on one condition It is not much Remove thy ban from my wife, and baptise her infant daughter and I am content I would not ask thee for this service, slight though it be, but the poor soul hath set her mind upon it Wilt thou do it?"

"No," replied the abbot, shuddering, "I will not baptise a daughter of Satan I will not sell my soul to the powers of darkness I adjure thee to depart from me, and tempt me no longer "

"Vainly thou seekest to cast me off," rejoined Demdike "What if I deliver thine adversaries into thine hands, and avenge thee upon them? Even now there are a party of armed men waiting at the foot of the hill to seize thee and thy brethren Shall I show thee how to destroy them?"

"Who are they?" demanded the abbot, surprised

"Their leaders are John Braddyll and Richard Assheton, who shall divide Whalley Abbey between them if thou stayest them not," replied Demdike

"Hell consume them!" cried the abbot

"Thy speech shows consent," rejoined Demdike "Come this way "

And, without awaiting the abbot's reply, he dragged his horse towards the butt-end of the mountain As they went on, the two monks, who had been filled with surprise at the interview, though they did not dare to interrupt it, advanced towards their superior, and looked earnestly and inquiringly at him, but he remained silent, while to the men-at-arms and the herds-men, who demanded whether their own beacon-fire should be ex-

tinguished as the others had been, he answered moodily in the negative

"Where are the foes you spoke of?" he asked, with some uneasiness, as Demdike led his horse slowly and carefully down the hill-side

"You shall see, anon," replied the other

"You are taking me to the spot where you traced the magic circle," cried Paslew, in alarm "I know it from its unnaturally green hue I will not go thither"

"I do not mean you should, lord abbot," replied Demdike, halting "Remain on this firm ground Nay, be not alarmed, you are in no danger Now bid your men advance, and prepare their weapons"

The abbot would have demanded wherefore, but at a glance from Demdike he complied, and the two men-at-arms, and the herdsman, arranged themselves beside him, while Fathers Eastgate and Haydocke, who had gotten upon their mules, took up a position behind

Scarcely were they thus placed, when a loud shout was raised below, and a band of armed men, to the number of thirty or forty, hapt the stone wall, and began to scale the hill with great rapidity They came up a deep, dry channel, apparently worn in the hill side by some former torrent, and which led directly to the spot where Demdike and the abbot stood The beacon-fire still blazed brightly, and illuminated the whole proceeding, showing that these men, from their accoutrements, were royalist soldiers

"Stir not, as you value your life," said the wizard to Paslew, "but observe what shall follow"

CHAPTER II

THE ERUPTION

DEMDIKE went a little further down the hill, stopping when he came to the green patch He then plunged his staff into the sod at the first point where he had cast a tuft of heather, and with such force that it sink more than three feet The next moment he plucked it forth, as if with a great effort, and a jet of black water spouted into the air, but heedless of this, he went to the next marked spot, and again plunged the sharp point of the implement into the ground Again it sank to the same depth, and, on being drawn out, a second black jet sprung forth

Meanwhile, the hostile party continued to advance up the dry channel before mentioned, and shouted on beholding these strange preparations, but they did not relax their speed Once more the staff sank into the ground, and a third black fountain followed its extraction By this time, the royalist soldiers were close at hand, and the features of their two leaders, John Braddyll and Richard Assheton, could be plainly distinguished, and their voices heard

"'Tis he! 'tis the rebel abbot!" vociferated Braddyll, pressing forward "We were not misinformed He has been watching by the beacon The devil has delivered him into our hands"

"Ho! ho!" laughed Demdike

"Abbot no longer—'tis the Earl of Poverty you mean," responded Assheton "The villain shall be gibbeted on the spot where he has fired the beacon, as a warning to all traitors"

"Hä, heretics!—ha, blasphemers!—I can at least avenge myself upon you," cried Paslew, striking spurs into his charger But ere he could

execute his purpose, Demdike had sprung backward, and catching the bridle, restrained the animal by a powerful effort

"Hold!" he cried, in a voice of thunder, "or you will share their fate"

As these words were uttered, a dull, booming, subterranean sound was heard, and instantly afterwards, with a crash like thunder, the whole of the green circle beneath slipped off, and from a yawning rent under it burst forth, with irresistible fury, a thick, inky coloured torrent, which, rising almost breast high, fell upon the devoted royalist soldiers, who were advancing right in its course. Unable to avoid the watery eruption, or to resist its fury when it came upon them, they were instantly swept from their feet, and carried down the channel

A sight of horror was it to behold the sudden rise of that swarthy stream, whose waters, tinged by the ruddy glare of the beacon-fire, looked like waves of blood. Nor less fearful was it to hear the first wild despairing cry raised by the victims, or the quickly-stifled shrieks and groans that followed, mixed with the deafening roar of the stream, and the crashing fall of the stones which accompanied its course. Down, down, went the poor wretches, now utterly overwhelmed by the torrent, now regaining their feet only to utter a scream, and then be swept off. Here a miserable struggler, whirled onward, would clutch at the banks and try to scramble forth, but the soft turf giving way beneath him, he was hurried off to eternity

At another point, where the stream encountered some trifling opposition, some two or three managed to gain a footing, but they were unable to extricate themselves. The vast quantity of boggy soil brought down by the current, and which rapidly collected here, embedded them and held them fast, so that the momentarily-deepening water, already up to their chins, threatened speedy immersion. Others were stricken down by great masses of turf, or huge rocky fragments, which, bounding from point to point with the torrent, bruised or crushed all they encountered, or lodging in some difficult place, slightly diverted the course of the torrent, and rendered it yet more dangerous

On one of these stones, larger than the rest, which had been stopped in its course, a man contrived to creep, and with difficulty kept his post amid the raging flood. Vainly did he extend his hand to such of his fellows as were swept shrieking past him. He could not lend them aid, while his own position was so desperately hazardous that he did not dare to quit it. To leap on either bank was impossible, and to breast the headlong stream certain death

On goes the current, madly, furiously, as if rejoicing in the work of destruction, while the white foam of its eddies presents a fearful contrast to the prevailing blackness of the surface. Over the last declivity it leaps, hissing, foaming, crashing like an avalanche. The stone wall for a moment opposes its force, but falls the next, with a mighty splash, carrying the spray far and wide, while its own fragments roll onwards with the stream. The trees of the orchard are uprooted in an instant, and an old elm falls prostrate. The outbuildings of a cottage are invaded, and the porkers and cattle, divining their danger, squeal and bellow in affright. But they are quickly silenced. The resistless foe has broken down wall and door, and buried the poor creatures in mud and rubbish.

The stream next invades the cottage, breaks in through door and

window, and filling all the lower part of the tenement, in a few minutes converts it into a heap of ruin. On goes the destroyer, tearing up more trees, levelling more houses, and filling up a small pool, till the latter bursts its banks, and with an accession to its force, pours itself into a mill-dam. Here its waters are stayed until they find a vent underneath, and the action of the stream as it rushes downwards through this exit, forms a great eddy above, in which swim some living things, cattle and sheep from the fold not yet drowned, mixed with furniture from the cottages, and amidst them the bodies of some of the unfortunate men-at-arms which have been washed hither.

But ha! another thundering crash. The dam has burst. The torrent roars and rushes on furiously as before, joins its forces with Pendle Water, swells up the river, and devastates the country far and wide.*

The abbot and his companions beheld this work of destruction with amazement and dread. Blanched terror sat in their cheeks, and the blood was frozen in Paslew's veins, for he thought it the work of the powers of darkness, and that he was leagued with them. He tried to utter a prayer, but his lips refused their office. He would have moved, but his limbs were stiffened and paralysed, and he could only gaze aghaist at the terrible spectacle.

Amidst it all he heard a wild burst of unearthly laughter proceeding, he thought, from Demdike, and it filled him with new dread. But he could not check the sound, neither could he stop his ears, though he would fain have done so. Like him, his companions were petrified and speechless with fear.

After this had endured for some time, though still the black torrent rushed on impetuously as ever, Demdike turned to the abbot, and said—

"Your vengeance has been fully gratified. You will now baptise my child."

"Never, never, accursed being!" shrieked the abbot. "Thou mayst sacrifice her at thine own impious rites. But see, there is one poor wretch yet struggling with the forming torrent. I may save him."

"That is John Braddyll, thy worst enemy," replied Demdike. "If he lives he shall possess half Whalley Abbey. Thou hadst best also save Richard Assheton, who yet clings to the great stone below, as, if he escapes, he shall have the other half. Mark him, and make haste, for in five minutes both shall be gone."

"I will save them if I can, be the consequence to myself what it may," replied the abbot.

* A similar eruption occurred at Pendle Hill in August, 1669, and has been described by Mr Charles Townley in a letter cited by Dr Whitaker in his excellent 'History of Wharfedale.' Other and more formidable eruptions had taken place previously, occasioning much damage to the country. The cause of the phenomenon is thus explained by Mr Townley—'The colour of the water, its coming down to the place where it breaks forth between the rock and the earth, with that other particular of its bringing nothing along but stones and earth, are evident signs that it hath not its origin from the very bowels of the mountain, but that it is only rain water coloured first in the moss pits, of which the top of the hill, being a great and considerable plain, is full, shrunk down into some receptacle fit to contain it, until at last, by its weight or some other cause, it finds a passage to the sides of the hill and then away between the rock and swarth, until it breaks the latter and violently rush out.'

And regardless of the derisive laughter of the other, who yelled in his ears as he went, "Bess shall see thee hanged at thy own door," he dashed down the hill to the spot where a small object, distinguishable above the stream, showed that some one still kept his head above water, his tall stature having preserved him

"Is it you, John Braddyll?" cried the abbot, as he rode up

"Ay," replied the head "Forgive me for the wrong I intended you, and deliver me from this great peril"

"I am come for that purport," replied the abbot, dismounting, and disencumbering himself of his heavy cloak

By this time the two herdsmen had come up, and the abbot, taking a crook from one of them, clutched hold of the fellow, and plunging fearlessly into the stream, extended it towards the drowning man, who instantly lifted up his hand to grasp it In doing so, Braddyll lost his balance, but as he did not quit his hold, he was plucked forth from the treacherous mud, by the combined efforts of the abbot and his assistant, and with some difficulty dragged ashore

"Now for the other," cried Paslew, as he placed Braddyll in safety

"One half the abbey is gone from thee," shouted a voice in his ears, as he rushed on

Presently he reached the rocky fragment on which Ralph Assheton rested The litter was in great danger from the surging torrent, and the stone on which he had taken refuge tottered at its base, and threatened to roll over

"In Heaven's name help me, lord abbot, as thou thyself shall be holpen at thy need," shrieked Assheton

"Be not afraid, Richard Assheton," replied Paslew "I will deliver thee—I have delivered John Braddyll"

~~But~~ the task was not of easy accomplishment The abbot made his preparations as before, grasped the hind of the herdsmen, and held out the crook to Assheton, but when the latter caught it the stream swung him round with such force, that the abbot must either abandon him, or advance further into the water Bent on Assheton's preservation, he adopted the latter expedient, and instantly lost his feet, while the herdsmen, unable longer to hold him, let go the crook, and the abbot and Assheton were swept down the stream together

Down—down they went, destruction apparently awaiting them but the abbot, though sometimes quite under the water, and bruised by the rough stones and gravel with which he came in contact, still retained his self-possession, and encouraged his companion to hope for succour In this way they were borne down to the foot of the hill, the monks, the herdsmen, and the men-at-arms having given them up as lost But they yet lived—yet floated—though greatly injured and almost senseless, when they were cast into a pool formed by the eddying waters at the foot of the hill Here, wholly unable to assist himself, Assheton was seized by a black hound belonging to a tall man, who stood on the bank, and who shouted to Paslew, as he helped the animal to bring the drowning man ashore,

"The other half of the abbey is gone from thee Wilt thou baptise my child, if I send my dog to save thee?"

"Never!" replied the other, sinking as he spoke

Flashes of fire glanced in the abbot's eyes, and stunning sounds seemed to burst his ears. A few more struggles and he became senseless.

But he was not destined to die thus. What happened afterwards he knew not, but when he recovered full consciousness, he found himself stretched, with aching limbs and throbbing head, upon a couch, in a monastic room, with richly painted and gilded ceiling, with shields at the corners emblazoned with the three lures of Whalley, and with panels hung with tapestry from the looms of Flanders, representing divers Scriptural subjects.

"Have I been dreaming?" he murmured.

"No," replied a tall man standing by his bed-side, "thou hast been saved from one death to suffer another more ignominious."

"Ha!" cried the abbot, starting up and pressing his hand to his temples. "thou here?"

"Ay, I am appointed to watch thee," replied Dendike. "Thou art a prisoner in thine own chamber at Whalley. All has befallen as I told thee. The Earl of Derby is master of the abbey, thy adherents are dispersed, and thy brethren are driven forth. Thy two partners in rebellion, the abbots of Jervaux and Sallay, have been conveyed to Lancaster Castle, whether thou wilt go, is soon as thou canst be moved."

"I will surrender all—silver and gold, land and possessions—to the king, if I may die in peace," groined the abbot.

"It is not needed," rejoined the other. "Attainted of felony, thy land and abbey will be forfeited to the crown, and they shall be sold, as I have told thee, to John Bradelyll and Richard Assheton, who will be rulers here in thy stead."

"Would I had perished in the flood!" groined the abbot.

"Well mayst thou wish so," returned his tormentor. "but thou wert not destined to die by water. As I have said, thou shalt be hanged at thy own door, and my wife shall witness thy end."

"Who art thou?" I have heard thy voice before, cried the abbot. "It is like the voice of one whom I knew years ago, and thy features are like his—though changed—greatly changed. Who art thou?"

"Thou shalt know before thou diest," replied the other, with a look of gratified vengeance. "I farewell, and reflect upon thy fate."

So saying, he strode towards the door, while the miserable abbot arose, and moving with uncertain steps to a little oratory adjoining, which he himself had built, knelt down before the altar, and strove to pray.

CHAPTER III

WHALLEY ABBEY

A sad, sad change hath come over the fair Abbey of Whalley. It knoweth its old masters no longer. For upwards of two centuries and a half hath the "Blessed Place" grown in beauty and riches. Seventeen abbots have exercised unbounded hospitality within it, but now they are all gone save one!—and he is attainted of felony and treason. The grave monk walketh no more in the cloisters, nor seeketh his pallet in the dor-

matutiny Vesper or matin-song resound not as of old within the fine conventual church Stripped are the altars of their silver crosses, and the shrines of their votive offerings and saintly relics Pyx and chalice, thuribule and vial, golden-headed pastoral staff, and mitre embossed with pearls candlestick and Christmas ship of silver, salver, basin, and ewer—all are gone—the splendid sacristy hath been despoiled

A sad, sad change hath come over Whalley Abbey The libraries, well storcd with reverend tomes, have been pillaged, and their contents cast to the flame, and thus long laboured manuscript, the fruit of years of patient industry, with gloriously illuminated missal, are irrecoverably lost The large infirmary no longer receiveth the sick, in the locutory sitteth no more the guest No longer in the mighty kitchens are prepared the prodigious supply of meats destined for the support of the poor or the entertainment of the traveller No kindly porter stands at the gate to bid the stranger enter and partake of the munificent abbot's hospitality, but a churlish guard bids him lie away, and menaces him, if he tarries, with his halbert Closed are the buttery-hatches and the pantries, and the daily dole of bread hath ceased Closed, also, to the brethren is the refectory The cellarer's office is ended The strong ale which he brewed in October, is tapped in March by roystering troopers The rich muscadell and malmscy, and the wines of Griscoigne and the Rhine are no longer quaffed by the abbot and his more honoured guests, but drunk to his destruction by his foes The great gallery, a hundred and fifty feet in length, the pride of the abbot's lodging, and a model of architecture is filled, not with white-robed ecclesiastics, but with an armed earl and his retainers Neglected is the little oratory dedicated to Our Lady of Whalley, where night and morn the abbot used to pray All the old religious and hospitable uses of the abbey are foregone The reverend ~~ethics~~ ^{ethics} of the cloisters, scarce broken by the quiet tread of the monks, is now disturbed by armed heel and clank of sword, while in its saintly courts are heard the ribald song the profane jest, and the angry brawl Of the brethren, only those tending the cemetery are left All else is gone, driven forth, as vagabonds, with stripes and curses, to seek refuge where they may

A sad, sad change has come over Whalley Abbey In the plenitude of its pride and power has it been cast down, desecrated, despoiled Its treasures are carried off, its ornaments sold, its granaries emptied, its possessions wasted, its storehouses sacked, its cattle slaughtered and sold But though stripped of its wealth and splendour, though deprived of all the religious graces that, like rich incense, lent an odour to the fine, its external beauty is yet unimpaired, and its vast proportions undiminished

A stately pile was Whalley—one of the loveliest as well as the largest in the realm Carefully had it been preserved by its reverend rulers, and where reparations or additions were needed they were judiciously made Thus age had lent it beauty, by mellowing its freshness and toning its hues, while no decay was perceptible Without a struggle had it yielded to the captor, so that no part of its wide belt of walls or towers, though so strongly constructed as to have offered effectual resistance, were injured

Never had Whalley Abbey looked more beautiful than on a bright, clear morning in March, when this sad change had been wrought, and

when, from a peaceful monastic establishment, it had been converted into a menacing fortress. The sunlight sparkled upon its grey walls, and filled its three great quadrangular courts with light and life, piercing the exquisite carving of its cloisters, and revealing all the intricate beauty and combinations of the arches. Stains of painted glass fell upon the floor of the magnificent conventual church, and dyed with rainbow hues the marble tombs of the Lacies, the founders of the establishment, brought thither when the monastery was removed from Stanlaw in Cheshire, and upon the brass-covered grave-stones of the abbots in the presbytery. There lay Gregory de Northbury, eighth abbot of Stanlaw and first of Whalley, and William Rede, the last abbot, but there was never to lie John Paslew. The slumber of the ancient prelates was soon to be disturbed, and the sacred structure within which they had so often worshipped upreared by sacrilegious hands. But all was bright and beautiful now, and if no solemn strains were heard in the holy pile, its stillness was scarcely less reverential and awe-inspiring. The old abbey wreathed itself in all its attractions, as if to welcome back its former ruler, whereas it was only to receive him as a captive doomed to a felon's death.

But this was outward show. Within all was terrible preparation. Such was the discontented state of the country, that, fearing some new revolt, the Earl of Derby had taken measures for the defence of the abbey, and along the wide-circling walls of the close were placed ordnance and men, and within the grange stores of ammunition. A strong guard was set at each of the gates, and the courts were filled with troops. The bray of the trumpet echoed within the close, where rounds were set for the archers, and martial music resounded within the area of the cloisters. Over the great north-eastern gateway, which formed the chief entrance to the abbot's lodging, floated the royal banner. Despite these warlike proceedings, the fair abbey smiled beneath the sun, in all, or more than all, its pristine beauty, its green hills sloping gently down towards it, and the clear and sparkling Calder washing merrily over the stones at its base.

But upon the bridge, and by the river-side, and within the little village, many persons were assembled, conversing gravely and anxiously together and looking out towards the hills, where other groups were gathered, as if in expectation of some afflicting event. Most of these were herdsmen and farming men, but some among them were poor monks in the white habits of the Cistercian brotherhood, but which were now stained and threadbare, while their countenances bore traces of severest privation and suffering. All the herdsmen and farmers had been retainers of the abbot. The poor monks looked wistfully at their former habitation, but replied not except by a gentle bowing of the head to the cruel scoffs and taunts with which they were greeted by the passing soldiers, but the sturdy rustics did not bear these outrages so tamely and more than one brawl ensued, in which blood flowed, while a ruffianly arquebuser would have been drowned in the Calder, but for the exertions to save him of a monk whom he had attacked.

This took place on the eleventh of March, 1537—more than three months after the date of the watching by the beacon before recorded—and the event anticipated by the course without the abbey, as well as by those within its walls, was the arrival of Abbot Paslew and

Fathers Eastgate and Haydocke, who were to be brought on that day from Lancaster, and executed on the following morning before the abbey, according to sentence passed upon them

The gloomiest object in the picture remains to be described, but yet it is necessary to its completion. This was a gallows of unusual form and height, erected on the summit of a gentle hill, rising immediately in front of the abbot's lodgings, called the Holehouses, whose rounded, bosomy beauty, it completely destroyed. This terrible apparatus of condign punishment was regarded with abhorrence by the rustics, and it required a strong guard to be kept constantly round it to preserve it from demolition.

Amongst a group of rustics collected on the road leading to the north-east gateway, was Cuthbert Ashbead, who, having been deprived of his forester's office, was now habited in a frieze doublet and hose, with a short camlet cloak on his shoulder, and a fox skin cap, embellished with the grinning jaws of the beast, on his head.

"Eigh, Ruchot o Roaph's," he observed to a bystander, "that's a fearfo seet that gallas. Yoan been up to t' Holehouses to tey a look at it, beloike?"

"Naw, naw, ey dunna loike such seets," replied Ruchot o' Roaph's, "besoide, there wor a great rabblement at t' geate, an one o' them lunjus archer chaps knockt meh o' t' nob wi' his poike, an towd me he d'long me wi' t' abbut, if ey didna keep owt ot wey."

"And sarve te reet too, theaw craddimly carl!" cried Ashbead, doubling his horny fists. "Odds flesh! whey didna yo ha' a tussle wi' him? Mey honts are itchen for a bowt wi' t' heretic robbers. Walladey! walladey! that we should live to see t' oly feytheris driven loike hummo o' o' o' o' t' owd neest. Whey they sayn ot King Harry hon decreet ot we're to ha' naw more monks or friars i' aw Englundshiar. Ony think o' that. And dunna yo knoa that t' Abbuts o' Jervaux an Salley wor hongt o' Tizeday at Loncaster Castle?"

"Good lorjus bless 't!" exclaimed a sturdy hind, "we n a proddy king. Furst he chop off his woufe's heaad, an then hong's aw t' priests. Whot'll t' warlt cum to?"

"Eigh, by t' mess, whot *win* it cum to?" cried Ruchot o' Roaph's. "But we darnna oppen ovr mows fo fear o' a gog."

"Naw, beleday! boh eyst oppen mome woide enuff," cried Ashbead, "an if a dozen o' yo chaps win join me, cyn try to set t' poor abbut free whon they binks him herc."

"Ey d'as leef boide till to morrow," said Ruchot o' Roaph's, uneasily.

"Eigh, thou rt a timmersome teyke, os ey towd te afore," replied Ashbead. "But whot dust theaw say, Hal o' Nabs?" he added, to the sturdy hind who had recently spoken.

"Ey'n spill t' last drop o' meh blood i' t' owd abbut's keawse," replied Hal o' Nabs. "We widna stond by, an see him hongt loike a dog. Abbut Paslew to t' reskew, lads!"

"Eigh, Abbut Paslew to t' reskew!" responded all the others, except Ruchot o' Roaph's.

"This must be prevented," muttered a voice near them. And immediately afterwards a tall man quitted the group.

"Whoa wor it spoake?" cried Hal o' Nabs. "Oh, ey seen, that he-witch, Nick Demdike."

"Nick Demdike here!" cried Ashbead, looking round in alarm "Has he overheard us?"

"I oke enow," replied Hal o' Nabs "But ey didna mound him afore"

"Nawey noather," cried Ruchot o' Roaph's, crossing himself, and spitting on the ground "Owr Leady o' Whalley shuelt us fro' t' warlock!"

"Tawkin o' Nick Demdike," cried Hal o' Nabs, 'yo'd a strawnge od-venter wi' him t' neet o' t' great brast o' Pendle Hill, hadna yo, Cuthbert?"

"Yeigh, t' firrups tak' him, ey hadn" replied Ashbead "Theawst hear aw abowt it if t' will Ey wur sent be t' abbut down t' hill to Owen o' Gab's, o' Perkin's, o' Dannel's, o' Noll's, o' Ombrey's orchert i' Warston lone, to luk efter him Weel, whon ey gets ow'r t' stoan wa', whot dun yo think ey sees' twanty or throtty poikemen standing behint it, an they deshes at meh os thick os leet, an afore ey con roor oot, they blintfowl't meh, an clp an iron gog i' meh'mouth Weel, I con noather speak nor see, boh cy con use meh feet, soh ey punses at 'em reet an laft, an be meh troath, lads, yood'n a leawght t' hear how they roort, an cy should a roart too, if I couldn, whon they began to thwack me wi' their raddling pows, an ding'd meh so abowt t' heiod, that ey fell i' a swoond Whon ey cum to, ey wur loyin o' meh back i' Rimington Moor Every booaan i' meh hoid wratcht, an meh hewr war clottert wi' gore, boh t' ecbofid an t' gog wur gone, soh ey gets o' meh feet, an duddles along os wcel os ey con, whon aw ot wunce cy spies a lect glenting afore meh, an dawncing abowt loike an rwf or a wull-o'-whisp Thinks ey, that's Friar Rush an his lantein, an he'll lead me into a quagmire, soh ey stops a bit, to consider where ey'd getten, for ey didna knoa t' reet road exactly, boh whon ey stood still, t' leet stood still too, on then ey meyd owt that it cum fro' a owd ruint tower, an whot ey d fancied wur one lantern proved twanty, fo' whon ey reacht t' tower an pcept in thro' a brok'n winda, ey beheld a seet ey'st neer forgit—apack o' witches—eigh, witches'—sittin' in a ring, wi' their broomsticks an lanterns abowt 'em"

"Good lorjus deys!" cried Hal o' Nabs "An whot else didsta see, mon?"

"Whoy," replied Ashbead, "t' owd hags had a little figure i' t' midst on 'em, mowded i' cley representing t' Abbut o' Whalley—cy knoad it be t' moitre an crosier—an after each o' t' varment had stickt a pin i' its 'eart, a tall black mon stepped forard, an teed a cord rownd its throttle, an hongt it up"

"An' t' black mon, cried Hal o' Nabs, breathlessly,—“t' black mon wur Nick Demdike?"

"Youn guast it," replied Ashbead, "t' wur he' Ey wur so glopp'nt, ey couldn speak, an meh blud fruy i' meh veins, when ey heerd a fearfo voice ask Nick where his woufe an' child were 'The infant is unbaptised,' roart t' voice 'at the next meeting it must be sacrificed See that thou bring it Demdike then bowed to summat I couldna see, an aft when t' next meeting wur to be held 'On the night of Abbot Paslew's execution,' awnsert t' voice On hearing this, cy could bear nah longer, boh shouted out, 'Witches' devils' Mort deliver us fro' ye' An os ey spoke, ey tried t' barst thro' t' winda In a trice, aw t' leets went out, thar wur a great rash to t' dooer, a wurrin sound i' th' air loike a covey o' partridges fleeing off, and then ey heerd nowt more, for a great stoan

fell o' meh scoance, an knockt me down senseless When I cum to, I wur i' Nick Demdike's cottage, wi' his woife watching ower me, and th' unbaptised chilt i' her arms "

All exclamations of wonder on the part of the rustics, and inquiries as to the issue of the adventure, were checked by the approach of a monk, who, joining the assemblage, called their attention to a priestly train slowly advancing along the road

"It is headed," he said, ' by Fathers Chatburne and Chester, late bursters of the abbey Alack! alack! they now need the charity themselves which they once so lavishly bestowed on others "

"Waes me!" ejaculated Ashbead "Monry a broad merk han ey gotten fro 'am "

"They'n been kound to us aw," added the others

"Next come Father Burnley, granger, and Father Haworth, cellarer," pursued the monk, "and after them Father Dinkley, sacristan, and Father Moore, porter "

"Yo remeber Feyther Moore, lads," cried Ashbead

"Yeigh, to be sure we done," replied the others, "a good mon, a reet good mon! He never sent away t' poor—naw he!"

'After Father Moore," said the monk, pleased with their warmth, "comes Father Forrest, the procurator, with Fathers Redc, Clough, and Bancroft, and the procession is closed by Father Smith, the late prior "

"Down o' yer whirlyboons, lads, as t' oly feythurs pass," cried Ashbead, "and crave their blessing "

And as the priestly train slowly approached, with heads bowed down, and looks fixed sadly upon the ground, the rustic assemblage fell upon their knees, and implored their benediction The foremost in the procession passed on in silence, but the prior stopped, and extending his hands over the kneeling group, cried in a solemn voice,

"Heaven bless ye, my children Ye are about to witness a sad spectacle You will see how he has clothed you, 'ed you, and taught you the way to heaven, brought hither a prisoner, to suffer a shameful death "

"Boh we'st set him free, oly prior," cried Ashbead "We'n mercyed up our moinds to 't Yo just wait till he cumis "

"Nay, I command you to desist from the attempt, if any such you meditate," rejoined the prior, "it will avail nothing, and you will only sacrifice your own lives Our enemies are too strong The abbot himself would give you like counsel "

Scarcely were the words uttered, than from the great gate of the abbey there issued a dozen arquebussiers with an officer at their head, who marched directly towards the kneeling hinds, evidently with the intention of dispersing them Behind them strode Nicholas Demdike In an instant the alarmed rustics were on their feet, and Ruchot o' Roaphs, and some few among them, took to their heels, but Ashbead Il'd o' Nabs, with half-a-dozen others, stood their ground manfully The monks remained, in the hope of preventing any violence Presently the halberdiers came up

"That is the ringleader," cried the officer, who proved to be Richard Assheton, pointing out Ashbead, "seize him "

"Naw mon shall lay honts o' meh," cried Cuthbert

And as the guard pushed past the monks to execute their leader's order,

he sprang forward, and wresting a halbert from the foremost of them, stood upon his defence

"Seize him, I say," shouted Assheton, irritated at the resistance offered

"Keep off," cried Ashbead, "yo'd best Louke a stag at bey ey 'm dangerous Waar horns' waar horns' ey sey"

The arquebussiers looked irresolute It was evident Ashbead would only be taken with life, and they were not sure that it was their leader's purpose to destroy him

"Put down thy weapon, Cuthbert," interposed the prior, "it will avail thee nothing against odds like these"

"Mey be, oly prior," rejoined Ashbead, flourishing the pike, "boh ey'st ony yield wi' loufe"

"I will disarm him," cried Demdike, stepping forward

"Theaw!" retorted Ashbead with a scornful laugh "Cum on then Hadsta aw t' fends i' hell at te back, ey shouldna fear thee"

"Yield!" cried Demdike, in a voice of thunder, and fixing a terrible glance upon him

"Cum on, wizard," rejoined Ashbead, undauntedly But, observing that his opponent was wholly unarmed, he gave the pike to Hal o' Nabs, who was close beside him, observing, "It shall never be said that Cuthbert Ashbead f'elt t' duk himsel' unfairly Nah, touch meh if theaw da'st"

Demdike required no further provocation With almost supernatural force and quickness he sprung upon the forster, and seized him by the throat But the active young man freed himself from the gripe, and closed with his assailant But though of herculean build, it soon became evident that Ashbead would have the worst of it, when Hal o' Nabs, who had watched the struggle with intense interest, could not help coming to his friend's assistance, and made a push at Demdike with the halberd

Could it be that the wrestlers shifted their position, or that the wizard was indeed aided by the powers of darkness? None could tell, but so it was that the pike pierced the side of Ashbead, who instantly fell to the ground, with his adversary upon him The next instant his hold relaxed, and the wizard sprang to his feet unharmed, but deluged in blood Hal o' Nabs uttered a cry of keenest anguish, and, flinging himself upon the body of the forster, tried to staunch the wound, but he was quickly seized by the arquebussiers, and his hands tied behind his back with a thong, while Ashbead was lifted up and borne towards the abbey, the monks and rustics following slowly after, but the latter were not permitted to enter the gate

As the unfortunate keeper, who by this time had become insensible from loss of blood, was carried along the walled enclosure leading to the abbot's lodging, a female with a child in her arms was seen advancing from the opposite side She was tall, finely formed, with features of remarkable beauty, though of a masculine and somewhat savage character, and with magnificent but fierce black eyes Her skin was dark, and her hair raven black, contrasting strongly with the red band wound around it Her kirtle was of murrey coloured serge simply, but becomingly fashioned A glance sufficed to show her how matters stood with poor Ashbead, and, uttering a sharp, angry cry, she rushed towards him

"What have you done?" she cried, fixing a keen, reproachful look on Demdike, who walked beside the wounded man

"Nothing," replied Demdike, with a bitter laugh, "the fool has been hurt with a pike. Stand out of the way, Bess, and let the men pass. They are about to carry him to the cell under the chapter-house."

"You shall not take him there," cried Bess Demdike, fiercely. "He may recover if his wound be dressed. Let him go to the infirmary—ha, I forgot—there is no one there now."

"Father Bancroft is at the gate," observed one of the arquebussiers, "he used to act as cururgeon in the abbey."

"No monk must enter the gate except the prisoners when they arrive," observed Assheton, "such are the positive orders of the Earl of Derby."

"It is not needed," observed Demdike, "no human aid can save the man."

"But can other aid save him?" said Bess, breathing the words in her husband's ear.

"Go to," cried Demdike, pushing her roughly aside, "wouldst have me save thy lover?"

"Take heed," said Bess, in a deep whisper, "if thou save him not, by the devil thou servest! thou shalt lose me and thy child."

Demdike did not think proper to contest the point, but approaching Assheton, requested that the wounded man might be conveyed to an arched recess, which he pointed out. Assent being given, Ashbead was taken there, and placed upon the ground, after which the arquebussiers and their leader marched off, while Bess, kneeling down, supported the head of the wounded man upon her knee, and Demdike, taking a small phial from his doublet, poured some of its contents down his throat. The wizard then took a fold of linen, with which he was likewise provided, and dipping it in the claxir, applied it to the wound.

In a few moments Ashbead opened his eyes, and looking round wildly, fixed his gaze upon Bess, who placed her finger upon her lips to enjoin silence, but he could not, or would not, understand the sign.

"Aw's o'er wi' meh, Bess," he groaned, "but ey'd reither dee thus, wi' thee beside meh, than i' ony other way."

"Hush!" exclaimed Bess, "Nicholas is here."

"Oh! ey see," replied the wounded man, looking round, "boh whot matters it? Ey'st be gone soon. Ah, Bess, dear lass, if ther'wdst promise to break thy compact wi' Satan—to repent and save thy precious sowl—ey should dee content."

"Oh, do not talk thus!" cried Bess. "You will soon be well again."

"Listen to me," continued Ashbead, earnestly, "dust na knoa that if thy babe be na bapteesed efors to-morrow nact it'll be sacrificed to t' Prince o' Darkness? Go to some o' t' ol' feythurs—confess thy sins an implore Heaven's forgiveness—an mayhap they'll save thee an thy infant."

"And be burned as a witch," rejoined Bess, fiercely. "It is useless, Cuthbert, I have tried them all. I have knelt to them, implored them, but their hearts are hard as flints. They will not heed me. They will not disobey the abbot's cruel injunctions, though he be their superior no longer. But I shall be avenged upon him—terribly avenged."

"Leave meh, theaw wicked woman," cried Ashbead, "ey dunna wish to ha' thee near meh Let meh dee i' peace"

"Thou wilt not die, I tell thee, Cuthbert," cried Bess, "Nicholas hath stanchd thy wound"

"He stawncht it, seyest to?" cried Ashbead, raising himself "Ey'st never owe meh loife to him"

And before he could be prevented, he tore off the bandage, and the blood burst forth anew

"It is not my fault if he perishes now," observed Demdike, moodily

"Help him—help him!" implored Bess

"He shanna touch meh," cried Ashbead, struggling and increasing the effusion "Keep him off ey adjure thee Farewell, Bess," he added, sinking back utterly exhausted by the effort

"Cuthbert!" screamed Bess, terrified by his looks, "Cuthbert! art thou really dying? Look at me, speak to me! Ha!" she cried, as if seized by a sudden idea, "they say the blessing of a dying man will avail Bless my child, Cuthbert, bless it!"

"Give it me!" groaned the forester

Bess held the infant towards him, but before he could place his hands upon it all power forsook him, and he fell back and expired

"Lost! lost! for ever lost!" cried Bess, with a wild shriek

At this moment a loud blast was blown from the gate tower, and a trumpeter called out,

"The abbot and the two other prisoners are coming"

"To thy feet, wench," cried Demdike, imperiously, and seizing the bewildered woman by the arm, "to thy feet, and come with me to meet him"

CHAPTER IV

THE MALEDICTION

THE captive ecclesiastics, together with the strong escort by which they were attended, under the command of John Braddyll, the high sheriff of the county had passed the previous night at Whitewell, in Bowland Forest, and the abbot, before setting out on his final journey, was permitted to spend an hour in prayer in a little chapel on an adjoining hill, overlooking a most picturesque portion of the forest, the beauties of which were enhanced by the windings of the Hodder, one of the loveliest streams in Lancashire His devotions performed, Paslew, attended by a guard, slowly descended the hill, and gazed his last on scenes familiar to him almost from infancy Noble trees, which now looked like old friends, to whom he was bidding an eternal adieu, stood around him Beneath them, at the end of a glade, couched a herd of deer, which started off at sight of the intruders, and made him envy their freedom and fleetness as he followed them in thought to their solitudes At the foot of a steep rock ran the Hodder, making the pleasant music of other days as it dashed over its pebbly bed, and recalling times when, free from all care, he had strayed by its wood-fringed banks, to listen to the pleasant sound of running waters, and watch the shining pebbles beneath them, and the swift trout and dainty umber glancing past

A bitter pang was it to part with scenes so fair, and the abbot spoke no word, nor even looked up, until, passing Little Mitton, he came in sight of Whalley Abbey. Then, collecting all his energies, he prepared for the shock he was about to endure. But, nerved as he was, his firmness was sorely tried when he beheld the stately pile, once his own, now gone from him and his for ever. He gave one fond glance towards it, and then painfully averting his gaze, recited, in a low voice, this supplication

"Miserere mei Deus, secundum magnam misericordiam tuam. Et secundum multitudinem miserationum tuarum, dele iniquitatem meam. Amplius lava me, ab iniquitate mea, et à peccato meo munda me."

But other thoughts, and other emotions, crowded upon him, when he beheld the groups of his old retainers advancing to meet him—men, women, and children, pouring forth loud lamentations, prostrating themselves at his feet, and deploring his doom. The abbot's fortitude had a severe trial here, and the tears sprung to his eyes. The devotion of these poor people touched him more sharply than the severity of his adversaries.

"Bless ye! bless ye! my children," he cried, "repine not for me, for I bear my cross with resignation. It is for me to bewail your lot, much fearing that the flock I have so long and so zealously tended will fall into the hands of other and less heedful pastors, or, still worse, of devouring wolves. Bless ye, my children, and be comforted. Think of the end of Abbot Paslew, and for what he suffered."

"Think that he was a traitor to the king, and took up arms in rebellion against him," cried the sheriff, riding up, and speaking in a loud voice, "and that for his heinous offences he was justly condemned to death."

Murmurs arose at this speech, but they were instantly checked by the escort.

"Think charitably of me, my children," said the abbot, "and the blessed Virgin keep you steadfast in your faith. Benedicite!"

"Be silent, traitor, I command thee," cried the sheriff, striking him with his gauntlet in the face.

The abbot's pale cheek burnt crimson, and his eye flashed fire, but he controlled himself, and answered meekly—

"Thou didst not speak in such wise, John Braddyll, when I saved thee from the flood."

"Which flood thou thyself caused to burst forth by devilish arts," rejoined the sheriff. "I owe thee little for the service. If for naught else, thou deservest death for thy evil doings on that night."

The abbot made no reply, for Braddyll's allusion conjured up a sombre train of thought within his breast, awakening apprehensions which he could neither account for, nor shake off. Meanwhile, the cavalcade slowly approached the north-east gateway of the abbey—passing through crowds of kneeling and sorrowing bystanders,—but so deeply was the abbot engrossed by the one dread idea that possessed him, that he saw them not, and scarce heard their woeful lamentations. All at once the cavalcade stopped, and the sheriff rode on to the gate, in the opening of which some ceremony was observed. Then it was that Paslew raised his eyes, and beheld standing before him a tall man, with a woman beside him bearing an infant in her arms. The eyes of the pair were fixed upon him with

vindictive exultation. He would have averted his gaze, but an irresistible fascination withheld him.

"Thou seest all is prepared," said Demdike, coming close up to the mule, on which Paslew was mounted, and pointing to the gigantic gallows looming above the abbey walls, "wilt thou now accede to my request?" And then he added, significantly—"On the same terms as before."

The abbot understood his meaning well. Life and freedom were offered him by a being, whose power to accomplish his promise he did not doubt. The struggle was hard, but he resisted the temptation, and answered firmly, "No."

"Then die the felon death thou meritest," cried Bess, fiercely, "and I will glut mine eyes with the spectacle."

Incensed beyond endurance, the abbot looked sternly at her, and raised his hand, in denunciation. The action and the look were so appalling, that the affrighted woman would have fled if her husband had not restrained her.

"By the holy patriarchs and prophets, by the prelates and confessors, by the doctors of the church, by the holy abbots, monks, and hermits, who dwelt in solitudes, in mountains, and in caverns, by the holy saints and martyrs, who suffered torture and death for their faith, I curse thee, witch," cried Paslew. "May the malediction of Heaven and all its hosts alight on the head of thy infant—"

"Oh! holy abbot," shrieked Bess, breaking from her husband, and clinging to Paslew's feet, "curse me, if thou wilt, but spare my innocent child. Save it, and we will serve thee."

"Avoid thee, wretched and impious woman," rejoined the abbot, "I have pronounced the dread anathema, and it cannot be recalled. Look at the dripping garments of thy child. In blood has it been baptised, and through blood-stained paths shall its course be taken."

"Hail!" shrieked Bess, noticing for the first time the ensanguined condition of the infant's attire. "Cuthbert's blood—oh!"

"Listen to me, wicked woman," pursued the abbot as if filled with a prophetic spirit. "Thy child's life shall be long—beyond the ordinary term of woman,—but it shall be a life of woe and ill."

"Oh! stay him—stay him, or I shall die!" cried Bess.

But the wizard could not speak. A greater power than his own apparently overmastered him.

"Children shall she have," continued the abbot, "and children's children, but they shall be a race doomed and accursed—a brood of adders, that the world shall fret from and crush. A thing accursed, and shunned by her fellows, shall thy daughter be—evil reputed and evil doing. No hand to help her—no lip to bless her—hate a burden and death—long, long in coming—finding her in a dismal dungeon. Now, depart from me, and trouble me no more."

Bess made a motion as if she would go, and then turning partly round, dropped heavily on the ground. Demdike caught the child ere she fell.

"Thou hast killed her!" he cried to the abbot.

"A stronger voice than mine hath spoken, if it be so," rejoined Paslew.

"Fuge miserrime, fuge malefice, quia iudex adest iratus."

At this moment, the trumpet again sounded, and the cavalcade being

put in motion, the abbot and his fellow-captives passed through the gate

Dismounting from their mules within the court, before the chapter-house, the captive ecclesiastics, preceded by the sheriff, were led to the principal chamber of the structure, where the Earl of Derby awaited them, seated in the Gothic carved oak chair, formerly occupied by the abbots of Whalley on the occasions of conferences or elections. The earl was surrounded by his officers, and the chamber was filled with armed men. The abbot slowly advanced towards the earl. His deportment was dignified and firm, even majestic. The exaltation of spirit, occasioned by the interview with Demdike and his wife, had passed away, and was succeeded by a profound calm. The hue of his cheek was livid, but otherwise he seemed wholly unmoved.

The ceremony of delivering up the bodies of the prisoners to the earl was gone through by the sheriff, and their sentences were then read aloud by a clerk. After this the earl, who had hitherto remained covered, took off his cap, and in a solemn voice spoke

"John Paslew, sometime Abbot of Whalley, but now an attainted and condemned felon, and John Eastgate and William Haydocke, formerly brethren of the same monastery, and confederates with him in crime, ye have heard your doom. To-morrow you shall die the ignominious death of traitors, but the king in his mercy, having regard not so much to the heinous nature of your offences towards his sovereign majesty as to the sacred offices you once held, and of which you have been shamefully deprived, is graciously pleased to remit that part of your sentence whereby ye are condemned to be quartered alive, willing that the hearts which conceived so much malice and violence against him should cease to beat within your own bosoms, and that the urns which were raised in rebellion against him should be interred in one common grave with the trunks to which they belong."

"And we the high and puissant king, Henry the Eighth, and free him from all traitors," cried the clerk.

"We humbly thank his majesty for his clemency," said the abbot, amid the profound silence that ensued, "and I pray you, my good lord, when you shall write to the king concerning us, to say to his majesty that we died penitent of many and grave offences, amongst the which is chiefly that of having taken up arms unlawfully against him, but that we did so solely with the view of freeing his highness from evil counsellors, and of re-establishing our holy church for the which we would willingly die, if our death might in anywise profit it."

"Amen!" exclaimed Father Eastgate who stood with his hands crossed upon his breast, close behind Paslew. "The abbot hath uttered my sentiments."

"He hath not uttered mine," cried Father Haydocke. "I ask no grace from the bloody Herodias, and will accept none. What I have done I would do again, were the past to return—nay, I would do more—I would find a way to reach the tyrant's heart, and thus free our church from its worst enemy, and the land from a ruthless oppressor."

"Remove him," said the earl, "the vile traitor shall be dealt with as he merits. For you," he added, as the order was obeyed, and addressing the other prisoners, "and especially you, John Paslew, who have shown

some compunction for your crimes, and to prove to you that the king is not the ruthless tyrant he hath been just represented, I hereby in his name promise you any boon which you may ask consistently with your situation. What favour would you have shown you?"

The abbot reflected for a moment

"Speak thou, John Eastgate," said the Earl of Derby, seeing that the abbot was occupied in thought

"If I may proffer a request, my lord," replied the monk, "it is that our poor distraught brother, William Haydocke, be spared the quartering-block. He meant not what he said"

"Well, be it as thou wilt," replied the earl, bending his brows, "though he ill deserves such grace. Now, John Paslew, what wouldst thou?"

Thus addressed, the abbot looked up

"I would have made the same request as my brother, John Eastgate, if he had not anticipated me, my lord," said Paslew. "but since his petition is granted, I would, on my own part, entreat that mass be said for us in the convent church. Many of the brethren are without the abbey, and if permitted, will assist at its performance"

"I know not if I shall not incur the king's displeasure in assenting," replied the Earl of Derby, after a little reflection, "but I will hazard it. Mass for the dead shall be said in the church at midnight, and all the brethren who choose to come thither shall be permitted to assist at it. They will attend, I doubt not, for it will be the last time the rites of the Romish church will be performed in those walls. They shall have all required for the ceremony"

"Heaven's blessings on you, my lord," said the abbot

"But first pledge me your sacred word," said the earl, "by the holy office you once held, and by the saints in whom you trust, that this concession shall not be made the means of any attempt at flight"

"I swear it," replied the abbot, earnestly

"And I also swear it," added Father Eastgate

"Enough," said the earl. "I will give the requisite orders. Notice of the celebration of mass at midnight shall be proclaimed without the abbey. Now remove the prisoners"

Upon this, the captive ecclesiastics were led forth. Father Eastgate was taken to a strong room in the lower part of the chapter-house where all acts of discipline had been performed by the monks, and where the knotted lash, the spiked girdle, and the hair shirt, had once hung, while the abbot was conveyed to his old chamber, which had been prepared for his reception, and there left alone

NOTE TO CHAPTER II OF THE "LANCASHIRE WITCHES"

The following interesting account of a phenomenon, somewhat similar to that described in the text, was obligingly furnished the Author by W. L. Sagar, Esq., of Southfield House, Marsden, near Burnley, in Lan-

cashire It is extracted from the *Manchester Guardian* of September, 1824, about which time the eruption in question occurred

ERUPTION OF CROW HILL BOG

FINDING myself, some days since, within a few miles of Crow Hill, between Keighley and Colne, I took the opportunity of visiting that site of a recent phenomenon, which still continues to be a subject of gaping wonder to our naturally curious countrymen who daily flock in multitudes to witness the desolating effects of the eruption. I have myself a strong thirst for novelty, and seldom suffer an occasion to pass which offers indulgence to this passion, particularly when the wonders of nature are its object, and I was the more desirous of seeing with my own eyes in this instance as no one of the descriptions I had read presented to my mind either a vivid picture of the scene, or satisfied me of the cause and manner of the occurrence. By the lovers of the marvellous, recourse is had to earthquakes and volcanic agitation, as the mighty engines alone capable of producing such mighty effects. Thunder, lightning, and waterspouts, have furnished other artists with tools for the work. We have also had writers who, with misplaced flippancy, have endeavoured to reduce the phenomena within the limits of those accompanying ordinary torrents, and who describe the roar of this immense mass of water, rock, and earth, as proper only to alarm the parson of the parish and a few old women.

The explanation which I have to offer is simple, but I think it sufficient. I aim, however, chiefly at the record and development of the facts and localities attending this very uncommon phenomenon which may possibly enable more skilful philosophers than myself to detect its true cause.

Crow Hill is an elevated tract of country, whose summit has been stated to be 1000 feet above the town of Keighley. I am inclined to think its height underrated. It is entirely moorland. Its peat is of a mature, perfect quality very black when dry and is accounted by the natives of the country an excellent fuel of its kind. The whole of this moor appears to be excessively absorbent and retentive of water, more particularly that portion of it which is now adjacent to the richest parts. Small patches or hillocks, bearing long, are separated by narrow stripes of deep, soft bog, which require the pedestrian's extreme caution in his march. I have travelled over many a mile of moorland, but I never set foot on one more spongy or elastic than this. The eruption (as it has been termed) of the bog took place on the 2nd of this month, between the hours of five and six o'clock, P.M. The weather, for many days previously, had been particularly fine, and the moors were unusually dry. The 2nd of September was very sultry and hot. Rain began to fall on Crow Hill about four o'clock, P.M., and shortly afterwards it fell at Stanbury, a village distant about three miles. It continued to rain, as the inhabitants say, "*fearfully*" till nearly six o'clock. Hail, also fell in pieces nearly large enough to break the windows, and it thundered heavily, and lightened awfully over Crow Hill. At about half past five o'clock, a loud roaring noise astonished the villagers, but the rain fell in such torrents as to keep them within their houses, so that in the immediate vicinity of the mountain the first rush of the waters was seen by very few persons. Its noise is represented to have been so great as to have been heard at a distance of six and eight miles.

The rain moderated about half past six and ceased about seven o'clock, when the brook was lined by the natives, regarding with dismay the change which a few moments had produced upon its green and fertile banks. The flood below Stanbury appears to have been at its highest about this time, when it exhibited the appearance of a wide and rapid torrent of black water, bearing down with it large masses of bog, floating with its heather uppermost, accompanied with trees, corn, and every kind of vegetable wreck. A picture of filthier havoc can scarcely be imagined than is exhibited along the course of this stream, from Stanbury upwards towards the mountain. Bridges are burst up, parapet walls, stone fences, mill dams are levelled and swept off, several holms of corn, cut or ready for the sickle, and green meadows, are so completely ploughed up, or covered with so thick a deposit of sludge, that not a trace of vegetation is visible. In parts, the water-course is choked, by the choking up of its bed with stones and rubbish, and one spot, of about a quarter of a mile in length, immediately at the foot of the hill, is now occupied with many thousand tons of rock and stones, which were brought down by the torrent, and were arrested by a small plantation of trees which offered

the first impediment to their course. On reaching the summit of the hill, its great elevation becomes fully apparent, and I think it will not be difficult to account for the disruption of so large a quantity of bog, and for the enormous flood of water, which at once produced and accompanied its precipitation. The summit is nearly flat for a great extent, or has at most only sufficient inclination to carry off its surface water, which has found its passage into the valley, down the very steepest side of the mountain. The head of the brook, effecting this discharge of the water, did not run above half a mile along the moor, and its dimensions according to the accounts I had received, did not exceed a yard in width, and about two feet in depth. It was impossible, therefore, that this channel could act as an efficient drain to so extensive a tract of moorland. The present appearance of this torrent bed is now exceedingly interesting, and exhibits an instance of the mighty effects which water in motion is capable of producing upon the crust of the earth. Its length upon the moor is now at least double that of its former course. Its width is several yards, and it has scooped out its bed to the depth of the bog, which varies in thickness from one yard to three. Being enabled to examine the bed of a secondary torrent which joined the main stream, I found that the peat or bog earth rests upon a stratum of compact blue clay, which appears to be completely impervious to water, as in no place could I perceive a single crevice or fault, or any discolouration of it by the bog water.

The torrent has worn its way down to the clay bottom, but it could not penetrate this stiff stratum. I may here remark, that but trifling disturbance of the bog has taken place where it rests on the sandstone, which, being of more uneven surface, presents to the peat a firmer and less slippery basis than the blue clay. It is evident that the vegetating peat is of less specific gravity than water, from the circumstance of its floating down with the stream in such large masses, after the torrent had reached a more even bed. I conceive, then, that the excessive quantity of rain which fell with such unusual violence on the moor penetrated the bog to its very bottom, which was composed of the impenetrable blue clay. It is reasonable to suppose that the rain may have broken down and carried into the original brook fragments of peat sufficient to dam up its insignificant bed. In this case, the rain continuing to fall, and no sufficient outlet being open to carry it off, the waters would accumulate upon the moor until the resistance offered by the dam would yield to the pressure, and a sudden liberation of the flood would be effected. An immense moving force would thus be instantaneously exerted, and portions of bog, already buoyant almost to floatage, would give way to its impulse, and be carried down the stream. The continuity of the bog being thus destroyed and a drain opened, which by its depth put the adjacent parts under the action of a pressure, successive masses of peat would yield, and at the same time the stream would be increased by the addition of the black fluid contained between the hassocks or patches of the firmer peat. That the supposition of a waterspout is unnecessary, is clear from two successive repetitions of the eruption when no rain fell. The second slip occurred at nightfall on the 2nd September, unaccompanied by the roaring noise of the first eruption, which was probably occasioned not only by the deluge of water, but by the dislodgment and rolling down of so great a number of stones and rocks. The third eruption, which was very considerable, took place about nine o'clock on the morning of the 3rd September, and large masses of bog were brought down by the water. In the interval between the first and third eruption, I was informed that no rain had fallen. Of this last there were many eye-witnesses, whom curiosity had led upon the moor, and they describe the appearance to have been that of masses of bog, heaving slightly and by degrees, falling into the bed of the torrent, which had been formed by the first eruption, accompanied by a rush of water. This is to be accounted for from the great retentiveness of water which the moor possesses, and for which the trench opened by the first eruption had not proved a sufficient drain. Pools of water remained on the moor, which suddenly found a passage into the bed of the torrent under the peat, on the top of the blue clay, and by the water lumps of bog were swelled into the stream.

That a considerable drainage has taken place already in the immediate vicinity of the torrent bed, is evident from the subsidence and cracked appearance of the bog in those parts. This subsidence extends some hundred yards beyond the head of the present watercourse. A very erroneous idea has been conveyed to me by the accounts I have happened to read of the phenomenon respecting the

amount of disrupted bog. From them I conceived that a certain patch or tract had been removed. This is not the case. A canal, or wide ditch, has been opened by the operation of the water, and the former contents of this channel are the portions of the moor carried away. The sides of this channel are very irregular, and difficult of access, from the quantities of soft boggy mud which remain deposited. The subsidence along the banks of this channel extends, in many parts, as much as twenty yards on each side of it, and, nearer to the precipice, the stream of mud had a width of fifty or sixty yards. A cart road, formed of stones, which formerly traversed a part of the moor on the bank of the brook, is entirely washed away. I have mentioned that, on quitting the moor, the brook suddenly precipitates itself into the valley. This rapid descent is not perpendicular, but in a horizontal line of a quarter of a mile. I should estimate the fall at 400 feet. It was from this spot that the stones and rock were dislodged, and it is here that the most interesting results of the torrent are visible. Its bed of solid rock has in some parts been deepened from two to three feet, and in consequence of the opposition of sudden turns in the course, and of a frequent narrowing of the channel, the torrent assumed an undulating outline, like to the course of a round ball put in motion from the summit of a high hill, and possessing sufficient momentum to rise over minor eminences in its way to the bottom.

By this action, the water occasionally dashed over high points of rock or land, sweeping down such puny opponents as the stone dykes. The natural bed of the torrent is very deep along this precipitous descent, but narrow, as is common to such situations. The quantity of water suddenly let loose and rushing down it was too great to escape through the more confined parts of this channel, and it consequently rose over the banks, and, in some places, to the depth of thirty and forty feet. About two miles from the edge of the mountain it washed away part of a bridge, and I found that it had there attained a depth of fifteen feet. The Leeds dyers appear to have been seriously inconvenienced for a few days by the impurity of the water of the river Aire, into which the brook from Crow Hill falls at Keighley. It is estimated that by the course of these streams Leeds is thirty-five miles distant from the mountain. Shoals of fish were destroyed by the poisonous or suffocating nature of the water, which must have been too thick for the support of animal life. I have entered into this minute detail of the present state and appearance of the moor, in consequence of hearing that the Leeds people talked of putting a dam across the stream on the moor, with the view of preventing the recurrence of an event which has so troubled their waters. In my opinion this would be the most certain method of reproducing it. Rather let the present channel be kept open, let it be widened but not deepened, and let numerous branch drains be cut into it. It must be expected that great quantities of muddy water, and even of bog itself, will come away in heavy rains or after deep snows in the course of the ensuing winter, but much might be done by a few men in the next month to diminish the evil, and no time should be lost in setting about it. The good people of Leeds, who, as I am informed, use the water of the Aire for household as well as for manufacturing and chemical purposes, will show their wisdom by giving some consideration to the subject. It is a matter also of no little importance to the numerous millowners on this mountain stream, to put a stop to these impetuous and filthy outbreaks.

The machinery of a cotton mill above Stanbury appears to have sustained considerable damage by the unwelcome entrance of the water and sludge into the rooms. I am surprised that this factory withstood the shock of the waters, exposed as it was to their brunt.

THE STUDENT AT COLOGNE

BY THE AUTHOR OF THE "BATTLE CROSS," "ELLIE FORESTERS," &c

IN the year 17— the city of Cologne presented a different appearance to what it does now. Nevertheless, though it contained not so many wonderful things, more reverence was paid to what it then exhibited.

First, there was the magnificent cathedral of St Peter, and within that edifice the tomb of the Three Wise Men of the East, or Kings of Cologne, as they were called. They were interred in a purple shrine spangled with gold, set upon a pedestal of brass in the midst of a square mausoleum, faced within and without with marble and jasper. There they still repose, as many who have seen them declare, stretched at full length in all the odour of sanctity, bedecked with crowns of gold and jewels. In the church of St Ursula you might, for a very trifling sum, it was said, behold the bones of the eleven thousand Virgin Martyrs. Some of the heads of these revered ladies are preserved in cases of silver, some are covered with red embroidered stuffs, and some have caps of cloth of gold and velvet.

Besides these defunct virgins, Cologne boasts of the living canonesses of St Ursula, who are all countesses, and who will show you the crown of thorns, and the vessel into which the water was converted into wine at Cana. The church of St Geneva, however, defies all competition in respect to relics. It contains the heads of nine hundred Moorish cavaliers, all crowned with caps of scarlet, and adorned with pearls. No wonder, then, Cologne was an archbishop's see from time immemorial, and the head city in Christendom. These Moorish cavaliers, we are informed, served in the army of Constantine, before he was converted to the true faith and were beheaded because they refused to sacrifice to idols.

The city of Cologne, however, in spite of its relics and spiritual riches, and its three hundred and sixty-five churches and chapels, and its great extent and antiquity, was but an ill-designed and awkwardly-built city. Its principal thoroughfares were narrow and confined, and so great was the intricacy of its streets, that its houses seemed to have first been jostled together by one earthquake, and to have become located after the confused scramble they made to escape from the effects of another. The private edifices were for the most part dark and ill-lighted, the windows being composed of small round bits of glass.

However, ill-paved streets, narrow houses, relics of saints, strict ecclesiastical dominion, and tall, narrow, and crowded dwellings, could not prevent the growth and impulses of nature, and as many a sweet flower blooms in shade and obscurity, so many a lovely and modest maiden drew breath within the walls of old Cologne.

But of all the beauties that inspired the hearts of the young bachelors, or attracted the attention of the priests, none equalled Lorinella von Hälten. She was a proud beauty, too, and her dark blue eyes made no unconscious mischief when she upraised them at her devotions at St Ursula, and glanced for a moment around her—only a moment!—then again, deep as ever in her duties. As she returned home from mass through the principal thoroughfare, though it was often thronged with

gallant cavaliers, she scarcely vouchsafed to the proudest of them more than a hasty glance. Nevertheless, she had already won the hearts of many to an ardent affection, and set others raving in a kind of despair, which vented itself in a thousand mad and eccentric modes—sometimes in seeming anger, sometimes pretended scorn—as every look and gesture, nay, even the fluttering of a feather in her hat, or the *negligée* of a stray ringlet beneath it, being criticised with the keenest spirit. In fact, nothing was talked of but Lorinella von Halen.

The church she frequented was always crowded. The officiating minister said it was his eloquence—the admirers of Lorinella declared it was her beauty, that was the source of attraction, so he got promoted, and she was staid at.

She had a great many eligible offers, and some ineligible ones. Counts and barons of the archbishopric, and even of the empire, were in the list of her suitors, and gentlemen with handsome mustachios and no titles at all, who came from Baden-Baden.

Her father, who was of good family, amused himself all day as an amateur mechanic, taking little watches to pieces, and making gun-burrs, and had no time to attend to Lorinella. However, being once much pressed by an importunate suitor as he was fitting up a smoke-jack, “he declared he would never interfere with his daughter’s inclinations, if she would but leave him to his wheels and pinions.” Lorinella heard this, and, smiling to herself, determined to remain her own mistress as long as possible, and to revenge her sex for the cruelties they had often endured from mankind.

Now it happened, that about this time there arrived at Cologne a certain dashing and daring young spirit from Berlin, who, for some mad prank or other played off upon the professors of his college, had been obliged to rusticate. Godfrey Rudel was as complete a specimen of the German Burschen as ever “came over the Rhine.” The swagger, address, and buoyance of his fraternity, suffered nothing in his person. He could smoke like a foundery chimney, and as for fighting, he had acquired the true turn of the right wrist to such a nicety, that he could write his name backwards with his broadsword on his opponent’s face without trouble.

He was also lucky in being unencumbered with censorious uncles, or cross and nervous aunts, nay, he had not even a father alive to call him to account, that worthy functionary having lately died, leaving Godfrey all his possessions.

These were not very numerous, and his son, who hated delay, at once made a bargain with the family lawyer, and sold all his claims for a sum in ready money. This amount scarcely exceeded three hundred and six dollars. Godfrey, however, thought it an immense sum, so he determined to act with becoming spirit, and commenced his career at Cologne in a manner which should do no dishonour to the university at which he had graduated, or rather attempted so to do.

Accordingly, with hat, cloak, and sword of the newest fashion, he would lounge and saunter through all the places of general resort, frequent the most notorious houses of public entertainment. As he drank against the thirstiest, quarrelled and fought with the most reckless, he revelled with all, his dollars began speedily to melt away. Now and then a sort of uneasy sensation came over him. He had reflections at times

respecting the fund whence he should derive a supply when his present resources were exhausted. However, he never thought very long on any particular subject, and whenever such ugly cares obtruded, he took an extra bottle of the best hock and a "topper" of "golden wasser."

It may naturally be supposed, the theatres, the gaming-houses, and various smoking and drinking-rooms occupied no inconsiderable portion of Rudel's attention. Occasionally, however, he went to the cathedral to hear the anthem, and often took his station near the porch of St Ursula, with other companions, to observe the pretty citizens' daughters coming forth from their devotions.

During one of these inspections, he caught sight of the graceful form—nay, he had even a glance, a stray one of course, from the dark eyes of the beautiful Lornella. He had no time to analyse that glance—it was indeed a sunny mystery of smiles—momentary, intoxicating, enigmatical, significantly full of a profundity of dazzling unmeaningness. He was struck at once—it floored him.

Godfrey could think of nothing else. Theatres, club-houses, nay, every place of public or private entertainment, charmed him no longer. Even the jokes and pleasantries of his friends became intolerable, and witticisms, which once appeared to contain the very essence of humour, seemed positively unbearable.

It was not long, of course, before he became thoroughly acquainted with the history of the charming young creature who had enchanted him. There was nothing very consoling in it, certainly. However, in spite of her pride and disdain, he determined to win the prize. Accordingly, he became as devout as he was previously inattentive to his religious duties, never omitting any festival or fast in which he thought there was a chance of his seeing his beloved at the church of St Ursula. Lornella was very punctual, too, but on no occasion was she unattended by her maid, Clarschen.

In this artificial state of society it does not do to leave everything to chance. Nature herself, in spite of what poets say, "looks best with her hair combed." The Venus de Medicis would scarcely be tolerated in a ball-room without stays. Thus, beauty itself is heightened by attention to certain rules and formulas, and the adornment of the hair, the lips, and the eyes, is an especial science. Nay, we have known a smile of heavenly sweetness to have been inspired by a looking-glass, and an expression of unadorned simplicity to have been only acquired by the labour and assiduity of hours.

Thus, in the masterpieces of our great painters, when a lovely object is presented as the most prominent study, the background is zigzagged with lightning, and dark and stormy clouds. The great Lely was very fond of this, and court beauties who, on most occasions, would have fainted at the sight of a spider, sat smiling unconscious nothingness, or nursing pet lambs in silk and brocade, under some of the vilest weather which ever deformed the skies.

So it was with Lornella von Halen. She was a great artist. She understood perfectly the doctrine of contrasts. All beauty and loveliness and taste herself, her chosen attendant was hideous and ugly.

The lady trod like an antelope on the heather, the domestic stumped up the church like a sowherd, with noise enough to awaken any one but the vergers.

Lorinella's eyes were as beautiful as two stars under a sable cloud—Clarschen's were like a goat's. Lorinella's lips, especially the upper one, would have thrown a small poet into convulsions, and have induced Phidias to destroy his Venus as exemplifying something beyond the sculptor's art. Clarschen's face exhibited a compound expression between *Caracalla* and monkey, and her upper lip was so long that it made game of her face, her nose having crept half-way up her forehead in alarm, her chin was like the knuckled fist of a prize-fighter, besides, she squinted a little, and sported copper-coloured hair.

Godfrey Rudel endeavoured unceasingly to attract the attention of Lorinella rarely, however, did she bestow a glance upon him, and even then it only increased the pangs he felt, since he found, in spite of all his assiduity and attention, he was as far off as ever from his object. Often did he drop the sweetest nosegays in her path, and scatter in her way flowers bound with little scraps of parchment, containing verses in praise of her divinity, and expressive of his own misery.

Lorinella heeded them not, and trod them beneath her feet as though they were but the spontaneous herbage of the roadway which sprang up to greet her.

Perseverance, however, will subdue the greatest difficulties, and great was Godfrey's delight one Sunday morning when he beheld Lorinella and Clarschen enter the cathedral, the latter carrying in her hands for her mistress one of his precious nosegays, around which he had twined a most heart-controlling epistle. Looking earnestly towards that part of the church which the young beauty and her attendant occupied, he was rewarded, towards the conclusion of the service, by a glance and a smile—such a smile!—not from Lorinella, indeed, but one by proxy, from her handmaid.

This circumstance, he felt assured, was of happy augury, he had gained the confidence of his mistress's companion. She would be sure to present him with the flowers, and then!—his verses would effect the rest! He was intoxicated with hope, so he went home, and, as he had lived upon very little else but love during the last fortnight, he made a night of it, and became intoxicated with Schiedam.

On the Friday following he again saw Lorinella and her abigail at St Ursula's. He sought in vain during the service to obtain a glance from the mistress; however, he was rewarded by a most friendly recognition from the maid. He scattered, indeed, his nosegays about him to no purpose, and, almost in despair, was about to return to his lodgings, when all at once he beheld Clarschen approaching him. He was delighted with this mark of attention, and still more so, when he was addressed in terms which came at once to the subject of his love and devotion to Lorinella. Clarschen, however, informed him, that though his attentions and constancy were highly commended, she had as yet made no serious impression upon her mistress's heart, still, as a friend, she advised him to persevere, declaring that a few trinkets and jewels bestowed by way of presents, were far more lasting acknowledgments of love and attachment than frail and fading flowers, or scraps of verses, however high-flown and beautiful. Godfrey was not slow in taking this hint, and, after a long conversation with Clarschen, who was no ways willing to shorten their conference, he begged her to accompany him to a jeweller's shop, and assist his choice in selecting some handsome ear-rings and necklaces for

Lornella Clarschen seemed quite alive to this business, addressing the jeweller with the utmost familiarity, bidding him, with perfect confidence, display all his most costly articles. Not a few of these she compelled Godfrey to purchase, so that the unfortunate student, after paying away nearly all his ready money, was glad at last to escape without exposing his poverty.

The lady's maid then hastened homewards, promising Godfrey to exercise her best services with her mistress, and to obtain from her the acceptance of his gifts. She could not part, however, without giving him a most affectionate squeeze of the hand, and offering him her cheek for a caress—a ceremony which, after some hesitation, he felt himself bound by the laws of gallantry to perform. Some days elapsed before Lornella was again visible. At length he met her returning from mass. There were two or three cavaliers in her company. She was laughing gently at their remarks, when, raising her dark and beautiful eyes smiling with the sunniest mirth that ever lit the orbs of woman, she encountered the enraptured glance of Godfrey, who, planted close to a pillar in the aisle of the cathedral, with a most romantic air (up in hand, was intently watching all her movements. Lornella instantly withdrew her eyes, accompanied with an expression of scorn not to be misunderstood. The student was thunderstruck, he had neither power nor courage to follow her. One circumstance, however, increased his perplexity: he felt assured that one of his diamond ear-rings glittered against her swanlike neck, and as she drew off her glove to adjust a rebellious ringlet, after she had passed him, he felt certain that his emerald ring sparkled on her finger. Immediately afterwards she was lost in the crowd.

The disconsolate lover saw no more of her that day. He stood musing for some time upon his desperate fortunes, when suddenly he felt himself pulled by the sleeve, and, looking round, beheld the significant and expressive eyes of Clarschen fixed upon him.

"Courage, most gallant cavalier!" she exclaimed. "You perceive—the lady has accepted your presents!"

"Yes, and treated their donor like a dog."

"Her pet poodle! ah, ha!" All pretence—just a little wilfulness to show her power. Despair never yet won fair lady. 'Tis your own fault, man."

"How?" exclaimed Godfrey.

"How!—why look at her dark eyes, they did but chide your coldness, and while other lovers are serenading their mistresses from night till morn, she has never heard the sound of a flute or lute-string from Godfrey Rudel."

"Is that it?"

"Yes, you great calf."

"I will come this very night," exclaimed the student.

"Do so," rejoined Clarschen. "In the street of the 'Three Kings,' under the green-latticed balcony, at twelve, and I will warrant, if you sing as becomes a lover and a gallant cavalier, you shall not want for auditors."

Godfrey was transported, he thrust into Clarschen's nowise unwilling grasp a couple of florins. She still lingered—the embrace—yes, that was it—"Bah!" said Godfrey, when she had departed.

It is an old, old custom that of making love and wailing music beneath.

the stars, and from all time there have been gentle voices, ay, and gentle hearts too, that have responded to it. What joy, what fear, under the silence of those midnight skies ere the first fond note be broken! Eyes dark or blue, and a soft cheek, all the softer from the roseate tinge of excitement, as yet unseen or dimly marked in the shadows, things to be dreamed of or raved after, and then, too, like a stray star from the heaven of his love, a flower—a nosegay, dropped at the singer's feet! The lattice clicks, the curtain falls, all again is gloomy and silent—all, save the passionate hearts of the lovers. And now at last they part, he seeking his home, to rest as well he may, while she retires to repose in a delicious dream till morning.

PART II

GODFREY RUDEL, though not much of a musician, repaired to the spot at the hour appointed. He had a tolerable voice, and an excellent memory, and a ready knack at extemporising, so he contrived to commence his serenade with spirit.

For some time he sung apparently in vain. At length a window opened, and he beheld a head covered with a tall peaked red cap. At first he was somewhat alarmed lest he had aroused the lady's father, or perhaps disenchanted the spirit of her great-grandmother, for the apparition had a strange appearance. As he played on, his confidence returned. He approached the window, he addressed some soft words to the red nightcap, it nodded in recognition, and Godfrey, becoming quite enchanted, breathed all manner of soft and endearing epithets. Suddenly he heard a burst of laughter, the window slammed, and he found himself in the hands of the watch. Alas! it was not under the clear and balmy skies of Spain or Italy that he had made his avowal of an honourable love—no, indeed, but in a city where the police are ever on the alert, by an excessive zeal to prove their diligence, and assert their incapacity by allowing real delinquents to escape, and harmless fellows, like our serenader, to be entrapped.

Godfrey was obliged to submit to some hours' confinement, but, as nothing very serious could be urged against him, he was set at large after paying a heavy fine, and having to mourn the loss of his guitar, which he was told had been dashed to pieces in the tumult, though he was not aware he had made so desperate a resistance.

Indignant and humiliated, he remained long away from his accustomed haunts, until, one day meeting Clarschen, she accosted him in so affectionate a manner, and expressed to him the grief of her mistress at his capture, after a method so warm and consoling, that he felt his courage renewed to undergo the greatest trials.

Still he could not refrain from expressing his impatience at the unsatisfactory progress of his suit, the more so, as he had accidentally met Lornella the second morning after his serenade, and she had passed him as though he were the most unmusical genius in the world.

"You are a wayward fellow, indeed!" exclaimed Clarschen, "you may be very well skilled in geometry, but you cannot measure the depths of a woman's feelings—gentle, suffering, devoted woman," continued Clarschen, playing a tattoo upon the top of a post which stood by the roadway. "Woman! the unoffending victim of her affections, woman! the meek,

the enduring' On my life she loves you' ay, better than her little finger—"

"Indeed," said Godfrey

"Ay, indeed! most learned cavalier"

"She has a peculiar way of showing it"

"Peculiar? how unkind! so have we all She is a beauty, and has been a spoilt child, depend on it, she only wants a fitting opportunity of reciprocating your affection"

"Would I thought so"

"Persevere, and we shall see a happy conclusion"

"We, indeed," muttered Godfrey, however, he felt comforted at this, and, in spite of her ugliness, could not but consider Clarschen as a very sensible person Nevertheless, he continued obstinate, and expressed his full determination to have some better proofs of his mistress's good wishes than seeing her at midnight nod to him from a window in a red nightcap "A few words from herself in reply to my numerous sonnets?" he muttered, "or at least a moment's private conversation?"

"You shall have both," said Clarschen, confidently, "depend upon me for a *bullet-doux*, and as for a *tête-à-tête*, never trust me more if I don't bring you together to-morrow at the cathedral, only you must go and station yourself in the choir before it is lighted up Lornella shall come to the same form as if by mistake or inadvertence, and there, beneath the fourth pillar of the south transept, you will both have an opportunity of saying a thousand delightful things"

Godfrey was so overjoyed at this proposal, that he dismissed Clarschen with a double fee—an oblation pleasant enough when the recipient is a pretty woman, but rather a work of supererogation in the present instance All that night the poor student could dream of nothing else but Lornella's dark eyes, and the felicity of squeezing her hand and breathing his vows in a whisper, lest he should disturb the service

Morning came, and, after breakfast, Godfrey took a long, lonely walk into the country to pass the time away until the evening When he returned he partook of a hasty meal, and commenced the labours of his toilet, selecting the most splendid suit in his wardrobe, affixing a fresh heron's plume to his cap, and a new cord and button of bullion to his cloak

In truth, he cut a gallant figure, only he wore his cap too much on one side, which gave him rather a rakish appearance for one so desperately in love Slowly at length he took his way to the cathedral, and had the gratification of finding that he had arrived in good time, as the vergers had hardly adjusted the different seats, so, loitering about for half an hour in the dusk, he endeavoured to read the epitaphs, and took a look at the stone monuments At length, a tribe of poor school children flocking into the edifice, he became horrified lest they should pre-occupy his chosen seat beside the fourth pillar, to which he accordingly repaired with all diligence

The church now filled apace What a watchful man was our student, he noted every cloak and shawl that showed itself at the chief entrance or the side porch, marking with a beating heart the progress of every cap and bonnet through the throng in hopes that it would at least nestle beside him; at length he beheld something very dark and shadowy approaching him Surely it was a woman's sainted form? He was not

mistaken, it must be, it could be no other than the beloved Lorinella herself! Now she looks round in bewilderment, as in search of him, ah! now she sees him, she rushes forward, she is by his side!

Then, whether prompted by the sanctity of the place, the gloom of the niche, or by her great and uncontrollable love, she yielded her hand to his caresses

Again and again Godfrey pressed her to his heart, when, at this auspicious moment, at some particular part of the service, every lamp and candlestick blazed with light, an immense jet of flame being thrown on the particular spot in which Godfrey and his beloved sat enshrined

The student turned with rapture to gaze upon the dark, fond eyes of his Lorinella, but what was his horror, when he beheld Clarschen clasped in his arms, and languishing beneath the weight of her affections

Scarcely twenty paces off, surrounded by a bevy of the gallant cavaliers of Cologne, sat Lorinella von Halen, her beautiful dark eyes absolutely raining on him a mixed shower of scorn and sunbeams

The companions, too, by whom she was attended, made no effort to repress their mirth and astonishment

Wonder we then that poor Godfrey became mad, furious that he would have dashed Clarschen from him if he could and have rushed from the cathedral. However, the crowded state of the edifice, and the impressiveness of the service, for the moment, restrained him. As for Clarschen, the more indignant he appeared, the more she endeavoured to console him with her caresses. He writhed and stamped one minute he shook his hand in the air like a madman, the next he sought to shelter himself behind the column. In vain, she held him to the bench, nor did his misery or his confusion end here. By chance, Godfrey had seated himself in that portion of the church devoted to ladies, who, after a certain domestic event, repair to the edifice to return thanks for their restoration to health. Now, it happened that the officiating priest had been informed that two females of the suburbs, who had recently blessed their lords with twins, would repair that evening to the churching-bench to receive his benediction. Unluckily, the worthy man was very short-sighted, and looking round upon that part of the edifice, and seeing two persons extremely intimate with each other, he called the special attention of the audience to Godfrey and Clarschen, and forthwith commenced to church them 'for the wonderful increase of healthy children with which they had blessed the Christian community'

Every eye of course turned towards the fortunate couple—nay, a confusion of suppressed but unwonted sounds filled the choir. Lorinella actually stood up among her companions, that she might have the better view!

This was too much, one stroke more than Godfrey could endure. He sprang from the form—gave himself a furious blow on the forehead, no one knew why, unless it was because Clarschen persisted in clinging to his legs, at length, however, with a desperate bound, he extricated himself, and overturning half-a-dozen benches in his way, rushed like a madman from the cathedral

He stayed not until he had reached his lodging, in a distant part of the city

He rushed up-stairs like a thunderbolt, absolutely overturning the landlady, who was steadying herself very carefully with one hand, while with

the other she was carrying up a dish of soup for an old invalid gentleman on the third floor

Godfrey threw himself into his chamber, locked, bolted, and barricaded the door, jumped into bed, and heaping the clothes over his head, and stuffing his fingers into his ears endeavoured to shut out the echoes of the shouts and laughter still ringing around him

Here he lay for some time In vain his landlady implored admission—for she believed him to be mad He was deaf to her entreaties, she went down to the street-door to look out for her husband to send him for the doctor

Scarcely, however, had she opened it, before Clarschen herself appeared She had completed her devotions, and had hurried to the poor student “She guessed how things were,” she said, “and came to offer her services”

“Ah, thank you, that is a dear creature!” sobbed the good landlady “He is sure to open the door when he hears your voice”

“Yes, but I must speak in my artificial tones,” said the lady’s maid, “or it will be too much for his nerves”

She then proceeded up-stairs, and addressed Godfrey through the key-hole in the voice and manner of the worthy abbé who had preached at St Ursula’s

The student, who had removed the clothes off his head in order to breathe a little more freely, hearing the sing-song voice of the preacher, conceived that the whole congregation were at his heels, and that the churching ceremony was about to re-commence, a vague idea of throwing himself out of the window presented itself However, with a bewildered air, he sat up in bed, and as he had a few arrangements to make previous to quitting the world, he commenced inditing his will, and endeavoured to write a line to Lorinella, finding it impossible to die without undervaluing her as to the object of his attachment

During this time, his landlady, Clarschen, the old sick lodger, and all the other lodgers, a great many of the neighbours, and half the idle people out of the street, began to grow impatient at neither obtaining an answer to their queries, nor ingress into Godfrey’s chamber

Clarschen now represented to all present her own delicate position as regarded the student, and her undoubted influence over him, and satisfactorily proved to the assembled friends that Godfrey’s conduct was owing to his self-reproach at having quarrelled with her in a fit of jealousy at church, and requested them forthwith to break open the door, that she might go in and put everything to rights This was accordingly done in spite of the barricade, and the whole assembly, so impatient were they to witness the *dénouement* of the affair, rushed in, or rather tumbled in, before Godfrey had time to sign his will or get the window open

Great, indeed, was his horror at seeing Clarschen at the head of the invaders However, she did not allow him much respite, for in a somewhat imperative manner, dismissing the party under the plea that she would bring him round in a few minutes, she began, after shedding a deluge of tears, to inveigh against his cruelty, and to proclaim her devoted constancy

“Her devoted constancy!” thought Godfrey If previously astonished at the progress of events, he was scarcely prepared for this avowal

"I have loved you long, and deeply," said Clarschen, between her sobs, "but your ingratitude will be my destruction"

"Loved me?" said Godfrey, sitting upright in bed, "surely you must be raving. Were not all my protestations addressed to your mistress? and had I not hopes from your own confession that they were not unfavourably received? Did she not even condescend to wear my presents?"

"She bought them of me," sobbed the lady's maid

"Bought them!" shouted the student, in a tone perfectly electrifying

"Yes—yes, she considered you as my lover"

"Lorinella consider me as your lover?" cried Godfrey, springing out of bed, and frantically looking at the glass, then at his razors, then at Clarschen, then at the window, then again at his razors, one of which he eagerly began to strop. At length, his words found renewed utterance, as he exclaimed, "Why, what on earth!—what witchcraft or delusion could have been practised on her?"

"None, none!" said Clarschen, "but as she thought the jewels were above my station, she kindly purchased them of me, that I might make suitable preparations for our union"

"And the serenade?" said the student, with the calmness of desperation

"Was addressed to me. My mistress was present, however, though she stood behind a curtain, as she could not believe you could be so devoted"

"Confusion!" said Godfrey, striking his forehead. "I was devoted! So then she considered we met by special appointment at the cathedral?"

"Certainly," replied Clarschen, brightening up and drying her tears. "Indeed, I assure you, she and all the good people of Cologne commended your attention, and considered you as the most devoted of admirers, and had it not been for that unlucky affair in getting on the wrong bench—"

"Ay," said the student, almost choking, "that *was* unlucky"

"But what matters it," responded the domestic, "if we love one another?"

"Oh, certainly not much, only we were church'd a little too soon"

"Yes, that is all," and as for the abbe, we can make up to him the loss of his fees by allowing him to marry us"

"Just so," said Godfrey, with calm desperation, "that is exactly my way of thinking"

At this moment the landlady, who, with a dozen neighbours had been eagerly listening at the door, looked in, and gave Clarschen a very significant smile, which was as much as to say, "Ah, my dear, I see you know how to manage the men"

The latter replied by a look equally complacent

Godfrey, who all the while had been walking up and down the apartment, now said in a low voice, which slightly trembled, but with the emphasis of a man who had taken some determined resolution—

"My dear Clarschen, I suppose all the world, after what has occurred, deem it imperative that our union take place, and are anxiously looking forward to the event, naturally concluding, that, as our courtship has afforded them so much interest, our marriage ought to claim on their part no less attention?"

"Certainly, the city talks of nothing else"

"I thought so Well, and when do you propose that the ceremony shall take place?"

"With as little delay as possible," she replied "It cannot be too soon after what has occurred"

"You are right—after what has occurred! Will to-morrow morning be soon enough for you?"

"Yes, to-morrow morning I shall be ready"

"And you will leave me, *now*?" said Godfrey, entreatingly "I have a few arrangements to make"

"Certainly, yet one embrace, Godfrey, my beloved"

"Faugh!" cried the student, turning away, "we shall have plenty of that for years to come"

"Ay, I forgot that" And Clarschen, after bestowing upon him a most languishing look, at last took her departure Scarcely had she been gone ten minutes before the landlady tapped at the door

"Come in," said Godfrey

The worthy woman, curtsying as she entered, said, "that having heard of his approaching marriage from her niece, who had just been informed of it in the market-place, she thought she could do no otherwise than wish him joy, and beg his acceptance of a small roasting pig, as a present for the wedding dinner"

"Thank you," said Godfrey "Have the goodness to put the little pig down on that chair"

Still the good creature lingered, no doubt thinking that the pig was worth an invitation to the wedding feast At length the student, divining her thoughts, told her "that Clarschen and himself would be happy if she would join a few select friends on the morrow to celebrate the auspicious event."

This she joyfully accepted, and having occasion to go a-visiting that evening, she spread the news far and wide among her friends

Before his accustomed hour of repose, Godfrey had received six other small roasting pigs and a leg of mutton from friends and acquaintances of the landlady The pigs were duly placed on the chairs in his apartment, and their donors complimented with invitations to the wedding repast

Two hours after midnight, when the moon had gone down, and the whole city was wrapped in gloom and darkness, save from an occasional lamp which shed its flickering and uncertain rays over the narrow and ill-paved streets, the glare of some light from the shipping by the quays, or from the fishing-boats on the bosom of the broad deep Rhine, the student at Cologne, after packing up his few books in one bundle, and his scanty wardrobe in another, and suspending both upon a stick, quietly descended the stairs, and let himself out at the front door

He left a note for his landlady, bequeathing her the seven small roasting pigs and the leg of mutton for any arrears of lodging for which he might be indebted.

He departed from Cologne with the value of about fifty florins in his possession Never was Godfrey Rudel again heard of

Some sensation was at first produced by his sudden disappearance It lasted exactly nine days, and then all was forgotten, though Clarschen

took care to spread pretty extensively the story of her woes and her desertion

Some years later, Germany was entranced by the eloquence and learning of a professor at Gottingen, who, rising from the lowest benches by his industry and ability, attained one of the most honourable and lucrative appointments in the university

He might have had no connexion with our student, certainly he bore a widely different name. One thing, however, was remarkable: the professor had a violent prejudice against the good city of Cologne, besides this, he suffered from a nervous affection of a most peculiar nature. He lost all his presence of mind and resolution at the sight of a petticoat, nay, this apparition almost threw him into convulsions, and his best friends, whenever he moved out of his college, which was only on rare occasions, kindly endeavoured to keep out of his sight all the human creatures who have an hereditary claim to that garment.

However, this is no certain proof of the professor's identity with Godfrey Rudel, many other worthy men being subject to the same infirmity

THE PHILOSOPHER OF THE YEAR 1949, OR, A HUNDRED YEARS HENCE

There lived a great philosopher, in nineteen forty nine,
Who, 'neath the Muses' tender fect, began to spring a mine,
And while he laboured hard, still he gloried in his strength,
And as he smiled in triumph, thus his verses flowed at length

Spirit of Anti Wisdom, hail! I pray thee be my muse,
Feed feed my incapacity, while knowledge I abuse,
Thus saith the proverb—and what man its truthfulness denies—
“Where ignorance is real bliss, 'tis folly to be wise.”

Intelligence! retire, or I will hurl a barbed dart
Of bitterest invective to pierce thy inmost heart
Talk not to me of England, Denmark, Germany, and France
Biography is—fiddlestick, and history, romance

Come round me, all ye doubters, and soon we will see, whether
There's one thing we'll believe, if we can but hold together
Hume doubted if he lived, and then he doubted if he doubted,
But though they fought him hard, he never confessed that he was routed

We don't believe in Homer. He never lived—not he,
And his epics and heroics may all be burned for me
We don't believe in Homer, and if there were a person
Who'd venture to avow it, we would not believe Macpherson

Bold Niebhuur was the hero. he was well armed cap a pie,
And he set off with a blazing weapon, called a Theory,
And Romulus and Livy he twirled over with his thumb,
Old Cures he pulled down, and in its stead built Quirium

Horatius tried to keep the bridge, but could not hold out long,
So he hit him with his Theory, and sold him for a song,
But the patent for his Theory he quite forgot to keep,
And many now make theories, and sell them very cheap

Down with all history, I say Ah! if I had the lead
 I'd set up schools and colleges to ~~un~~learn how to read.
 The time, though not arrived, yet is coming on apace,
 When with truth it shall be said, we're not a book believing race

They say that Louis Philippe reigned in eighteen forty-eight,
 He could not gain his people's love, but won his people's hate,
 He bade his driver, Guizot hold in tight the gallant French,
 And the minister pulled lustily, and gave a tearing wrench

The people kicked and reared, and quickly broke the tightened rein,
 And Guizot tottered in his seat and rolled upon the plain,
 And Barrot tried to hold them in, but 'twas no use to try,
 So, like a man, he gave it up, and joined the rebel cry

And Louis bade his soldiers fight, like brave men unto death,
 But they thought that they'd had fun enough, and so they saved their breath
 He didn't know his people were so very ultra Whig,—
 "He never dreamt, when he set out, of running such a rig"

Away went Louis, who but he! and thought he heard the sound
 Of rebels and of banquets, till he trod on British ground
 And the French set up a government, till its knell also rang,
 And after Louis Philippe soon they sent off Louis Blanc

But as for crediting all this—no, no, no, no, not I,
 We all agree that history and stuff is—all my eye
 Why all these things took place at least a hundred years ago,
 And who can tell what happened then, that I should like to know

They say the Pope was driven out in a gaudy footman's dress,
 And after that the Romans got into a precious mess
 For the merry men of France sent for their fiery troops, in hope
 That, as they had put down a king, they might set up a pope

And Oudinot marched over with five thousand gallant men,
 And, when he just had entered Rome, was driven out again,
 For Garibaldi armed his mob, and bade them fight it out,
 And so they did, and all the French sent to the right about

And then the tables turned The French they marched in triumph in
 And Garibaldi, he marched out, and didn't care a pin
 But, after all, his Holiness would trust to neither side,
 And at Gaeta, if they'd let him, he resolved his head to hide

And the Emperor of Austria in fright resigned his crown,
 For Vienna had risen up in arms, and fairly knocked him down,
 And Hungary was in revolt, and Lombardy at war,
 And his poor old eyes were wearied quite with looking out so far

Radetski southward went, to give the Italians a flick,
 And Schlick and Wndel, Windischgratz and Baron Jellachich
 Went out to fight the crack jaw names of Kossuth and Dembinski,
 For as for Bem, for euphony, he dropped his Polish inski.

And so the storm in Europe raged, till Nicholas must try,
 With a quiet Turkey look, to put his finger in the pie,
 And fifty thousand only-looking Russians drew the sword,
 Commanded by a man whose name's a terribly hard word

It's really hard to wade along, and tell you which is which,
 Debreczin, Ostenschen, Szegedin, and Paskiewitch,
 They're all such scraggy, craggy, Maggy-ar like looking places,
 I give it up, and will not try to clear up names and places.

But Grotenjehm, Sabrauski, Lewartowski, and their murky
Only soldiers sent the inskies off, with dusty feet, to Turkey,
So Bem, and Dem, and all of them, "had their diminished heads,
Though Nicholas he would not leave them quiet in their beds"

- His affection was so great for them, that off he sent a civil,
Complimentary, kind message to the Sultan, by Radzivil
' Czar Nicholas regards to the Sultan, and would be
Obliged if he would send to him each Polish refugee

"A spacious gibbet is prepared, and from it any number
Of Poles may be suspended, as good for nothing lumber"
The Sultan felt his poor heart beat, and loudly took to banging
At his chest, and then the floor, and said, "Send in Sir Stratford Canning"

And his Excellency came, and said, "O, Sultan, live for ever'
Let me humbly beg your Highness not to fall into a fever,
The Czar begins to bark, but do not fear that he will bite,
So arm your troops, and fire away—there'll never be a fight'

"That will I," said the Sultan "Ho! bid the troops to gripe
Their cutlasses most fiercely, and let each man light his pipe,
And into fighting order his mustachios let him stroke'
And so they did, and this big talking ended all in smoke

Oh, dear! what tales they did invent in those book reading days,
We'll make bonfire of them all, and what a pile we'll raise,
Pile Hume and Smollett up, and then apply a patent burner,
Scott, Lingard, Gibbon, Robertson, and Coxe, and Sharon Turner

Come, Burnet Tytler, D Aubigne, Adolphus, and Dalrymple,
Come, Watson, Mackintosh, we'll show you history made simple,
Come, Alison Mahon, Macaulay Prescott, come the Yankee,
Iheis, Thuttry, Schuller, Menzel, Mills, Professor Ranke

Come, old Herodotus, and bring the nine along with you,
Drag that great book, Thucydides your Greek will never do,
Come, I ivy, come, Polybius, and Tacitus, my men,
And tell those fellows after you to quicken, if they can

"Heap on more wood, the wind is chill, but, whistle as it will,
We'll have a bonfire long enough to reach to Christmas still
There, blaze away! O, History! how very small you look,
For nothing will we leave you—no, not a single book

While thus our great philosopher had watched the blazing pile,
He sat him down before the flames to rest himself awhile
'Thus History is gone,' said he, "her glories all are o'er,
And she and her eight hundred books shall bother us no more"

Then from his coat a book he drew, unfolded a long tree,
And so fetchingly he simpered as he read his pedigree
Yet a little something seemed to say, "Come, throw it on the fagot'
But he said, winking his eyes, "Don't you wish that you may get it"

"Let every one take care," said he—"take great care what they read,
And noxious books, as history, uproot each for a weed
Improper books they often are, and waste of time, at best,
Believe your genealogies, and bonfire all the rest"

RECREATION ON SUNDAYS

BY E P ROWSELL, ESQ

THERE can be no doubt but that the feeling excited at the witnessing, on a Sunday, a monster-train or a loaded steam-boat, is not at the moment of a gratifying nature. One is certainly moved to exclaim, "What a desecration of the Sabbath!" Of course the facilities offered to pleasure-seekers on the Sunday, by railway and steam boat companies, have a tendency to thin, more or less, our churches and chapels, and occasion a great deal of what is not strictly indispensable labour. There is no question of that fact, and it is better at once to state it boldly and look it calmly in the face. Afterward, however, let us, with equal fairness, examine the other facts in connexion with the subject, pointing in a different direction, and form, upon the whole, a rational and dispassionate judgment.

This is precisely what no one does. There are two great parties in the matter of the observance of the Sabbath. One party, headed by Mr Hume, and numbering in its ranks sundry individuals, whose opinions generally coincide with his on other questions would really seem to be desirous to do away with all outward distinction between Sunday and another day. We are no admirers of Mr Joseph Hume, and we differ with him much on this as on nearly all other subjects. On the other hand, we have Mr Spooner and Mr Plumptre, who would, we believe, go most extraordinary lengths the opposite way, stopping trains, steam-boats, coaches, shutting up this place and that place, and producing an immensity of inconvenience and discomfort. The fact is, that too often when antagonistic views arise on any point, the difference increases gradually. Men who have become identified with certain opinions feel a pleasure in confronting and thwarting men who are identified with the opposite opinions, and by and by the judgment, the calm, cool judgment is so interfered with by this party-feeling, that it flings up its office in despair, and the conflict is no longer that of one set of well weighed conclusions against another set of well-weighted conclusions, to be conducted with all gravity and solemnity, with a fervent desire not to gain a triumph, but to arrive at TRUTH, but is degraded into an undignified party struggle, in the heat of which the original difference becomes so marvellously widened, that the contrast between what each combatant now argues, and what he argued at the outset, is almost, if not quite, as decided as was at such outset the difference between him and his antagonist.

We have no doubt that Mr Joseph Hume glories in witnessing the effect produced on Mr Plumptre by his proposing that the National Gallery shall be open on Sunday, and I am sure that neither Mr Plumptre nor Mr Spooner would exhibit half the energy they display at Exeter Hall, if they did not mentally witness the irritation occasioned their old enemy by a perusal of their addresses (interrupted, as they would appear to have been, at every tenth word by 'loud cheers') in next day's newspaper.

However to proceed with our subject. Now, it is undoubtedly laid down in Holy Writ that we are to "remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy," and that our occupations on that day are to be of a decidedly pious and devotional character. Such being the case, is there not a strong call for everybody to attend divine worship and partake to the full of the benefits offered by public adoration? Before replying to this, let us briefly bring to mind the circumstance of our Saviour distinctly intimating, on one occasion, that it was "lawful to do well on the Sabbath-day."

Not now to enter into a lengthened quotation of the additional remarks uttered on the occasion alluded to, we would remind the reader, that the clear tenor of our Saviour's observations was, that in cases of emergency those things might be done on the Sabbath day, which, viewed in the abstract, would be altogether sinful and ungodly. Here, then, was opened a field for discretion. This thing which under the standing-law relating to the Sabbath I may *not* do, I *may* do if there be for it absolute requirement—a necessity which cannot be put aside. We desire to bring this argument to bear on all questions relating to the Sabbath. We lay great stress on the fact of its thus being lawful to exercise a certain discretion as to the employment of the Sabbath-day. In various ways, the due observance of the Sabbath is now intertered with. It is bad, that such is the case, is to be regretted, and if a change can wisely be effected, it should be made. But it may not be wisely effected, in other words, it may be, that, with the desired cessation of labour, would spring up an infinite amount of ill, and the throwing away the boon purchased with lawful money—that is, the good effected through the toil legalised and justified by the declaration above quoted—would, perhaps, entail an uprising of evil deeply to be deplored. We are not to consider, in reference to the observation of the Sabbath, that there has been imposed upon us a law from which we may not in the slightest degree deviate. The very lawgiver himself sanctioned and allowed—nay, enjoined—a deviation, under a peculiarity of circumstances, and striking as is the fact, it is nevertheless certain, that there might be a case where an apparently glaring desecration of the Sabbath would (if the expression be allowable) win from Deity a smile of approval, while a faithful observance of it under the standing-law would assuredly be regarded with a frown of displeasure.

Now, placing ourselves in the position of directors of railways or steam-boats, let us consider whether, in voting for offering facilities for pleasure-seekers on Sundays, we can conscientiously say that our aim is to do good. Yes, we *can* say so—if it be a good thing to give opportunity to the over-tasked labourer or mechanic, whose life is a life of toil—unremitting, enduring toil, involving, it may be, a premature grave, to leave, one day in the week, at least, the scene of his labour, and go forth to inhale the pure air, and to bask in the bright sun, with a glorious feeling of perfect freedom. Look at the courts and alleys of our great city. You shudder as you pass through them. Try to imagine remaining in them a day, and you will recoil at the thought. Yet their occupants remain in them weeks, months, years,—in winter and in summer, in fair weather and in foul, in healthy seasons and in sickly. And more than this, those occupants, while probably poorly-fed and scantily-clad, are all of them engaged in hard labour—labour, too, oftentimes of an injurious character, affecting both physical and mental well being. The lives of these poor people are shortened—it cannot be otherwise—and yet there is no remedy, we cannot make all the poor rich—we cannot make the getting bread invariably an easy matter—we cannot render every occupation innocuous and unobjectionable. But if—by placing it within the reach of these poor people, the going forth each seventh-day from their confined and unhealthy localities, to bright spots far away from London's smoke and filth, where the fresh, untainted air will cool their feverish brows—where the beautiful landscape will bring back lustre to their

clouded eyes—where the glorious sun, fully beheld and luxuriantly revelled in, and the soft blue sky, contemplated in its bewildering and thrilling expanse, will restore their energies and revive their spirits,—if in this way it be within our power to diminish misery and promote comfort, to battle with disease and to court health, to instil hope where there would otherwise be despair, to excite cheerfulness where there would be unmitigated gloom,—then we say, aye, although this cannot be done without the turning the Sabbath-day to other account than that to which those more happily-circumstanced should undoubtedly have regard yet that, as by the giving the facilities mentioned we shall be actually “doing well,” such a course on our part may most conscientiously be adopted

But let us view this matter in another light

Now, we never feel so religiously inclined as when we are rambling in the country on a fine summer's day There is something emphatically calming and soothing, something that sets itself most powerfully in antagonism with turbulent and unworthy thoughts, in the aspect of Nature, at the seasons when she wears her loveliest garb Who can, unmoved, gaze at the waving trees and verdant pastures, and indifferently contemplate the bright blue heavens? Who, when so occupied, has not felt there to rise up involuntarily within his bosom, a rich sense of benefits bestowed by an almighty hand, of continued loving-kindness exhibited by a never-sleeping and beneficent Creator? Whatever changes may be witnessed, the seasons come again in due course, whatever dark iniquity may be perpetrated—however low may, at the time, be the standard of morals, and however scant the religion, the sun shines on as of old, and the mighty progress of revivification is once more everywhere manifest And as the gaze is involuntarily directed upward, and becomes fixed on the glorious canopy above, hardened indeed must be the heart unstirred by a healthy emotion of mingled awe and veneration And greatly will that emotion be increased if, as the eye wonderingly scans the magnificent arch, and the mind, as it were, rolls over the unspeakable mystery of what lies beyond, and which may not be seen, there should rise up (as will probably be the case), with perfectly overwhelming force the recollection that there are those to whom that mystery has long been revealed, and who are at this moment inhabitants of “the land which lies beyond the grave” These are not strangers, but dear relatives and friends—the father and the mother, the brother, mayhap, and the sister, the wife and the child The blue heavens, their imagined home, have awakened thoughts of these, and as they all pass in review before the mental eye, each seems, with outstretched finger, to point to their present lofty abode And though we feel that many there are who will jeer at this as a far-fetched supposition, who will assert that the pleasure seekers on Sundays only fall into debauchery and excess, and never know a single thought of the character we have been describing; and though we are quite ready to allow that of some few the remark may hold good, yet it is our firm belief that the majority return to their dark homes in the evening with recruited strength and restored spirits encouraged, under the prospect of another week of toil, by an active feeling, that the contemplation of the bright blue sky and the beautiful scenery has given rise to within them, that whatever the difference between the hovel and the mansion, the same heaven covers all, and into the same heaven will hereafter be gathered, if found worthy—aye, both the lowly labourer and the exalted lord

Therefore, we say, let the poorer classes have their recreation on Sun-

days Do your best, indeed, to make them understand *why* you encourage them in the thus rendering a Sunday a day of amusement rather than of meditation and prayer, but, under present circumstances, place no hindrance in the way of gratification of the kind we have intimated Set it before them that Sunday ought emphatically to be a day of rest, but that, inasmuch as there went forth a merciful qualification of the command to keep it holy, when pressing circumstances should render a deviation desirable, such deviation may in crises be lawful, and be committed without sin Say to the poor man, "If no other day be open to you, away on the Sunday, with your wife and your children, to the green fields and lanes, have your day's pleasure, soberly and discreetly, and return in the evening, thankful for the benefit and the gratification you have received Yet, mark you, under any other circumstances this advice could not be given Take away what we may almost speak of as the *absolute necessity* for you and your family, situated as you are, to employ the Sabbath in this manner, and immediately there is removed all excuse for your not going to church Remember this, the permission above is one authorised to be given in infinite mercy, and remember also that—

The Being that is in the clouds and air,

That is in the green leaves among the groves,

may be worshipped with as much fervour and sincerity under the simple canopy of heaven, as within the walls of the most magnificent cathedral "

Now, it will be evident, that if the poor are entitled to recreation on Sundays only on the grounds stated, there can be no excuse to the rich if they observe not the day with all strictness With the higher class, Sunday should, indeed, be a day of perfect rest and every one should be taken not to require any labour on the part of others that can possibly be dispensed with What need of the services of a carriage and a couple of horses, and a coachman and footman, to reach a church scarce half a mile distant? What need of the afternoon drive in the Park, and the luxurious dinner in the evening? We do think there is a call for reform here—that the aristocracy might manage to *walk* to church, and to *walk* home again, that they might *walk* out, and not ride out on the Sunday—and that, on that day, they might benefit their digestion by the simplest meals, involving the least possible trouble to their domestics There is no excuse for Sabbath-breaking on the part of the rich—the rich man, with his abundance of unemployed time surrounded at all seasons with every comfort and pleasure, it is, indeed, a hard case if he cannot keep the Sabbath day holy But the poor man, we own we can listen to him, when he tells us that it is his only day of freedom from a toil that is knocking nails into his coffin A day in the country will drag out a few of the nails that the past week has inserted He has a wife and children, if his health fail, they will be cast into misery and want He knows that it is right to go to church on a Sunday, and he would like to go, yet he lingers The fresh air would do him and his family so much good—he cannot resist the temptation And we say there is no need so to do, he may go with an easy conscience He, and his wife, and his children may away into the fresh air and enjoy it to the full—only let them remember, as they drink it in in glorious draughts, as they admire the beautiful aspect of Nature, and wonderingly contemplate the clear blue heavens, that Deity in the wood and in the meadow can, even as in the sanctuary, listen to the outpourings of a thankful spirit, and give ear to the utterances of a grateful heart

NAY, BUT WAS IT A DREAM?

I have heard (but not believ'd) the spirits of the dead
May walk again

SHAKESPEARE

Tina! Tina!! Tina!!!

Oui, monsieur

Pourquoi ne me repondez-vous pas quand je vous appelle?

Je ne vous ai pas entendu, monsieur

Apportez moi, donc, mon bonnet de nuit

Oui monsieur Le voila

THIS short scene, about a nightcap, between a cosmopolite Britaine and a Franco-German demoiselle, took place in a summer-residence, or luthaus, on the brow of one of the spurs of the Odenwald

Gentle reader, have you ever rested your weary limbs in the Belvidere, on the summit of the Melibocus? It commands precisely the same view, and the scenic panorama is as beautiful as anything the earth's surface can produce

The luxuriant Bergstrasse, with its castled crags, orchards, and homesteads, immediately underneath The winding Rhine, glittering at intervals along the wide-pretend plain, which, through the hazy atmosphere of an autumnal eve, bore a closer resemblance to a distant inland sea or immense bay than that splendid expanse of land, apportioned to many kingdoms gladdened with a thousand towns and villages, rich in corn, in wine, and oil There it lay peacefully at my feet, spread out like a wonderful picture, framed in the thick foliage of the loaded vine, under which I was reclining Imagination, in a half dreamy state, carried me beyond the cloud-like outline of the Donnerberg, and the blue mountains which skirted the extensive horizon, my heart's spirit took wing, and entered the penetralia of friends far away, and held communion with them All nature was at rest, not even the ever-sounding trumpet of the restless gnat broke the solemn stillness, but myriads of notes were playing in the sunbeam, as it streamed in through the trellis "The little notes in the sun," saith the sage Bacon, "do ever stir, though there be no wind"

A mote! Aye, what is a mote? If one could catch one, and with a 100 000,000-magnifying-power solar or other microscope examine its configuration! There they dance and gambol, seemingly close packed together, yet each separate and apart, with, doubtless, ample room and verge enough to avoid jostling Detach one from the herd there, there they go, up and down, unsubstantial as phantoms Wonderful little motes dancing in the sunbeam! Bless my heart! a couple have just lodged on the rim of my spectacles How they are swelling out—puff! they are off, floating like soap bubbles in the air, there, now they gently descend and settle side by side on the handrail, and they still grow larger too By Jupiter, if the pellucid globes do not enclose a—a—how exquisitely pure! how radiant! but how indescribable! Listen! Why, verily, the little motes do converse together, in sweet angelic whisperings!

Now, is there one of us who can look back with satisfaction to our earthly sojourn? I fancy not one As to myself, there was no end of the

sufferings I endured in the course of that extremely dismal pilgrimage Have you ever heard of Mahomet, the false prophet?

Mahomet ' Never

Yes, he was long after your mortal state I was a follower of his, and ardent in the faith I turned Santon, dwelt in a cave for seventy years, and there mortified myself with stripes and fastings, in fact, I deprived myself of all the little comforts of that life for the better part of a century And for what? That I might, as I had been taught and really believed, ascend straight to the promised paradise, there to clasp in my arms the blue-eyed houris, whose smiles and endearments were to be the guerdon of the faithful Fool that I was, to be thus cozened and cheated by a mere camel-driver And how is it now? Why, I have not even the passions which I curbed and checked with so much difficulty, in order the better to enjoy the pleasures reserved to me by the prophet

It ill becomes you to complain You, at all events, died in your green old age, and before your grave was dug for you What if you had been buried alive as I was?

Buried alive!—in a swoon, eh? or perhaps under the influence of chloroform? How you must have been astonished, when you recovered your consciousness, and surveyed your close-fitting quarters?

You are mistaken A senate, styling themselves the wisest legislators of earth, and a people who had triumphed in arms over the bravest of mankind, condemned me to this punishment

You must have been guilty of some dreadful crime—murder, perhaps?

By no means

What had you done, then?

What had I done, indeed! Ah! what had I done!

You hesitate

The confession of certain offences committed in our mortal state, is ~~very~~ grating to one's feelings

Nonsense! what we did in the flesh concerns us but little now We should honestly and openly admit our past follies I, for instance, silly fool, during nearly the whole of my earthly pilgrimage macerated and scourged my poor miserable body, which you know could not help it I am sure you did not behave half so ridiculously Don't blush, tell me everything Who cares for the trifling stains upon an old moth-eaten garment, which has been long ago thrown aside, and which cannot be again worn?

(Heaving a sigh) You have, of course, heard of Rome?

Never

Why, the Romans conquered the world

The world! I declare I never heard a syllable about them But what has this Rome to do with your very extraordinary burial?

I was born in that city—vaingloriously called the Mistress of the Universe You must know, that the security of Rome was based upon the preservation of certain sacred relics—gifts of the gods, and in keeping alive a fire, which was supposed to have descended from heaven

This was a very stupid superstition, for a people represented as ruling the whole world by its arms, its laws, and its wisdom

I dare say you will think it still more extraordinary, when I tell you that the preservation of the sacred fire was entrusted to four virgins, who were *capte*, or taken to watch over the celestial flame in the temple,

and as the empire was thought to be in danger if the fire happened to be extinguished, the law punished our negligence with death. We were, moreover, devoted to the strictest chastity, under pain of being buried alive.

Ah! I perceive now very clearly why you were hurried to the tomb before you died. But I am astonished that so clever a people should allow their prosperity to depend, of all things, upon the frail tie of virginity.

There was nothing neglected to make us forget the sacrifice. Our privileges and prerogatives were most extensive. Wealth, rank, dignity, were bestowed upon us. We had the principal places at the public triumphs and amusements. Whenever we went abroad, we had the *fascces*—the emblems of the highest dignity—carried before us, and those of the consul, or prætor, were lowered in our presence, and made way for us. And if in our walk, without contract or design, we casually lighted upon a malefactor leading to execution, we had the right of delivering him from the hands of justice.

Very great privileges, certainly. But did you, in the midst of these honours, and this universal respect, consider yourselves recompensed?

In despite of the dreadful punishment which attended a breach of the rule—I—I committed sacrilege.

The violation of your vows must have been owing to some very powerful motive.

The desolation of Rome—the ruin of my family—the vengeance of the gods, and men—and the dreadful punishment in reserve—vanished in the presence of my lover. Did not he, too, risk as much as I did—perhaps more?

Ah! I have nothing to say.

When I was torn by the Pontifex Maximus from the arms of my relatives, I was a child, tranquillity reigned in my bosom when I took the vows, and the innocence in which I had been brought up prevented me from beholding the extent of the sacrifice I was compelled to make. But in the solitude of riper years and mature judgment, the veil of infancy was rent asunder, I felt an insupportable void, my fancy carried me beyond the walls of the temple, in search of some darling object, which it took pleasure to adorn with every attribute of manly perfection. Satiated with the homage of the multitude, I now longed for the liberty of the meanest peasant-girl. I saw nothing in the sacred fire burning upon the altar of Vesta, but an emblem of the restless passion which raged within my bosom.

You were at least more enlightened than I was. Originally the dupe of all these extravagances of which I became the victim, I was the martyr of sincerity, a rare example! But tell me of your lover, this man who induced you to commit the sacrilege, I am interested in him.

He was a Briton, holding exalted rank in the famous legion, *Invicta*. Juniores Britones intra Hispanias. I first saw him in a triumphal procession. He gazed at me with earnest attention, as if he recognised my countenance. A flame seemed suddenly to dart into my heart. I slightly removed the vitta, which depended from the infula on my head, and stole a hurried glance at him, and now a new feeling arose within me. I was invested with a new being, and instantaneously felt a foretaste of happiness. Ever, when I suspected my lover was in the temple, I studied to

walk with more grace and stateliness, under the purple mantle which hung in a long train from my shoulders. Concealed in the crowd, he watched me. Frequent shouts of acclamation were raised around me upon the festivals the multitude were ignorant for whose eye I strove to disflav the dignity of my carriage, and contributed to the pomp of that worship of which my lover was the sole object. But as soon as the crowd was dispersed, and the temple closed and silent, everything around me assumed the aspect of woe, my mind could only feel the sentiments of melancholy, and the tumults of despair, the solitary walls of my cell were the only witnesses of my sobs. I love, said I to myself, in my anguish, and my lover is in the heart of voluptuous Rome. Surrounded by easy and alluring beauties, will he not scorn a triumph which must cost him so much? He will never hazard death for me. The charms of all the women of Rome are at his service, they contend for him, they engage him each in her turn. Ah! he knows not how I adore him. Oh! that I should be condemned to this cruel state of uncertainty.

The Briton very likely said as much on his part.

He had perceived my sentiments, and from that hour he was worthy of me. On the first day of the great festival he visited the temple. My companions and I ranged in order, and carrying in our hands the sacred vessels, walked with slow and solemn steps round the inclosure of the sanctuary. A robe, as white as the purest snow, and nearly slight as gossamer, half revealed our charms. My lover had placed himself amongst the foremost of the crowd when I arrived at the spot where he stood. I gave him a look—half concealed under my vitta. He answered me by laying his hand on his heart, and at that moment I perceived his eyes sparkle like lightning, and moistened at the same time with tears. Mine became covered with darkness. Fainting, I grasped the vessel, which had almost fallen from my hands, but joy and hope soon filled my heart. Elated and satisfied, I advanced with a firmer step even to the altar. I had now no doubt of his daring—he was mine.

You interest me much, priestess. I, who never wished even to speak of love, now, while in the flesh, listen, with pleasure, to your description of it. I feel something very exciting in it. Continue your tale.

The next night, it became my turn to watch in the temple, to spend the long night within view of the sacred fire in order to keep it alive, its solitary and trembling flame was the only light in the lofty and spacious dome, when the flame grew pale it appeared still more awful, and inspired me with religious terror, but in this dreadful solitude the image of my lover seemed to wander and multiply itself around me. I spread forth my hands to heaven, uttering some inarticulate cries, not daring to offer up to it my culpable vow, and by a contrary sentiment, embracing the statue of Vesta, I exclaimed, "O goddess! if I offend you, cause the ice of this marble, which I press to my heart, to enter into my veins. I burn, and am dedicated to another god, of what avail can it be to thee that the sacred fire should be constantly fed by the hands of a virgin? Why should my homage become less pure by sharing my heart betwixt my worship and my love?" In pronouncing these words I heard a noise. I turned round, and from an opening in the roof I perceived a man prepared, as I thought, to throw himself from the height. I endeavoured to warn him, but was unable to speak. He glided down a rope and fell heavily on the pavement. I shuddered, for I feared he had defiled the

floor of the temple with his blood I ran to raise him up—he was my lover! He could not speak for some moments, but leaned his head and hands upon a pillar I was in agony He recovered himself, and pressed me to his heart We wandered hand in hand through the vast windings of this solitude, our words, our lips, our souls were soon mingled, transports of delirium and of love drove from my mind the idea both of the place in which I was and of the sacred deposit intrusted to me Abandoning myself to these new feelings, lost in mutual endearment and delight, the hours swiftly fled away, the future and the past both equally vanished Aurelius Conanus had become the divinity of the temple—my thoughts were only of him I did not perceive that darkness began to surround me—that it increased, and was about to envelop the whole temple The uncertain flame emitted its last gleam, I recollected the danger—I tore myself from the arms of my lover—the flame was pale, and glimmering—for a moment it seemed to rekindle—but the feeble blaze expired just as I reached the altar A thin smoke which exhaled announced the horrible judgment of the dreaded Pontifex Maximus I could not conceal my trouble Aurelius Conanus followed me instantly, and seizing my hand, already cold and icy, he supported my fainting body I implored Vesta, I implored the god of love With a strong breath Aurelius Conanus, recalled the extinguished flame Ye gods! he was then no longer criminal, since all at once I beheld the sacred fire rekindle, blaze, and revive from its embers

How grateful you must have been to Vesta!

How grateful was I to Cupid! Aurelius Conanus appeared more adorable than ever in my eyes, the danger which I had run rendered him still dearer to me I pressed him in my arms, and tears of gratitude for the first time equalled those of love

You were not ungrateful, as far as I can see

Alas! in the midst of these testimonies of the most vehement affection my pleasures were changed I felt already the horrors of separation Day was about to break, and I had need of a supernatural resolution to drive my lover from the temple Another day renewed my functions as officiating priestess

Which had become dear to you

I had named the same place—the same hour—he was sure of the same love How I wished to have been able to annihilate the interval which placed those slow and cruel hours between moments so short and delicious!

You made me tremble at the hour of danger, when the flame was just expiring, how could you dare to expose yourself again to the same risk, only a few days afterwards?

Ah, Santon, you never wooed! I see it plainly, you never beheld the hours but in the reveries of fancy Learn, then, what you never conceived What was it that induced me to engage in the first step? Was it not the yearning of the heart after nature? But love made the second Love had assumed, in my mind, a character of impatience and fury, to which I abandoned myself I was proud of my lover—proud of the sacrifice I had committed A sentiment so new seemed to render every object which had any connexion with my happiness full of the ardour with which my heart was penetrated I invoked the day, I looked at the sun, and complained of the tediousness of his progress I could have wished to hurry him to his setting, and so make him accomplish in one day the revolution of the whole interval, so long, and so

cruel Ah, Santon! I may surely be allowed to expose the whole extent of a weakness which I so cruelly expiated

I cannot help admiring how little of the vestal you had about you

Placed at a distance from this hideous temple, I should have been a wife—a mother

It is well said, and I who have fasted and scourged myself for seventy years, out of a pilgrimage of nearly a century, what good have I done in the world? I piously believed that this was virtue But they were as foolish at Rome as in Persia, this is at least some consolation Is the disease, I wonder, universal? But tell me, did Aurelius Conanus return?

Alas! yes, to our mutual misfortune

How?

Suspicious had been entertained, his steps were watched

Ah! I tremble for him This is much worse than the chance of the fire becoming extinguished

Vesta was avenged!

Cruel goddess! why were such deities invented by men?

She reigned long before I had existence, and I was her slave from my tenth year Ah, Santon, pity me! I abandoned myself to the raptures which attend successful and happy love My mind was above terror, superior to grief, and disregarded danger Calm and happy, I was lulled into that delicious and tender repose, in which the silent feeling of pleasure, unattended with its more violent transports, seems to unite and identify us with the object beloved Our souls, in unison, were inspired with the same thoughts and the same passions Ah, how shall I describe that scene of horror which succeeded! Melancholy howlings, and the lengthened accents of woe, make the temple resound from its foundations, armed guards arrive with torches, violate its sacred obscurity, enraged priests—the Pontifex Maximus at their head——

Priests! Then, indeed, it was all over with you I already behold you in the fatal cell

The distress of my disconsolate companions, the reproaches written on their brows, the indignation which glows in every face, and more than all, my lover in chains, struggling in vain, and casting upon me his last parting look—consider all these objects, they besieged at once my eyes, my heart I beheld the consternation, which, bursting from the narrow limits of the temple, spread over Rome, and extended itself to the utmost limits of her dominions You would have said that the mighty republic was tottering to its ruin I was stripped of my sacred vestments, they were now touched with horror Every order of men in the state foretold the most terrible disasters—public affairs, as well as private, were suspended One would have thought that Aurelius Conanus, by subduing me to his love, had broken the talisman upon which depended the salvation of the republic and the serenity of the universe

It was very extraordinary that so grave a people should have chosen so brittle a talisman

Sentence of death was instantly pronounced upon me by the voice of the pontiffs, they condemned me to expiate my offence in the horrid Campus Sceleratus, without the city-wall, there to descend alive into a kind of cavern, in which were placed, by a cruel pity, bread, water, milk, and a mournful lamp, as if to guide the victim to a foretaste of death, and prolong the punishment to which I was destined. I was interrupted

by no crowd on my way I was abandoned by all—by friends, by relatives I found myself surrounded only with priests and executioners, who, with downcast eyes, mournful and silent, guarded me to my tomb The Pontifex Maximus, as I was about to descend the fatal ladder which was to convey me for ever from the eyes of mortals, wished to exhort me, and tell me of his gods I imposed silence upon him “Barbarian, stop!” said I to him “Thou torest me from the arms of my parents, against their will I shall descend, without thy contaminating assistance, into the bowels of the earth, there I shall bear no more of thy sanguinary rites Is it for thee to judge of love? I die content, since Aurelius Conanus must die I have transgressed the laws of Vesta, but those of nature are more ancient and more sacred If, during my youth and inexperience, I blindly bore the chains of superstition, I have now broken them The fire which you preserve on the altar of Vesta shall die, but love, never—for it is kindled by the hand of the almighty Author of Nature This is the flame which I have cherished—which I have preserved with care—which will not abandon me even in death, or which rather shall survive my ashes”

This address did not of course move the priest?

It did not I descended the ladder, and entered the pit prepared for me Judge what I felt, when I saw the solid masonry gradually closing round me, and burying me within its massive embrace, by the light of the dull lamp which was to expire with myself What remains to be told cannot be expressed To die slowly, to suffer death a thousand times over, to pass from despair to annihilation, and from annihilation to despair, to suffer thus for the crime of having loved, what moments were those! But during the long progress of my sufferings, I never once complained of love, love was in my heart, and seemed to assuage my grievous pains The name of Aurelius Conanus was perpetually on my lips, and my greatest torment was to be ignorant of his fate—my only remorse from having been the cause of his untimely death I pardoned myself my own ruin, but I never ceased to think of Aurelius Conanus so long as my consciousness lasted

The past must be forgotten, since it is to us now the same thing whether we have been happy or miserable in our mortal state It is but a dream more than half effaced Disagreeable reflections ought not to disturb our present repose Wretched Rome and her bigoted priesthood! Do you imagine that there exists a community of Vestal virgins in the present age?

Are there any Santons, think you?

No doubt of it, and

“Holloa! old fellow, what! asleep over your pipe, eh? Come, arouse! the fire-flies are already sparkling among the trees, and you’ll catch cold

“Eh!—what? Where are they gone to?”

“Who? Surely you have not seen the Wild Huntsman and his unearthly train?”

“Ah! Fritz, my boy, I am heartily glad to see you Why, I do believe I have been dreaming, but it is always the way, under the influence of *mon bonnet de nuit*

“What, this?” demanded my friend, who held it out at the full stretch of his arm, and very tenderly by the top of the tassel—“what, this?”

“‘Tis true, there’s magic in the web of it”

JACOB VAN DER NEESS

A ROMANCE

BY MADAME PAALZOW

CHAPTER XVIII

A DIFFERENCE of opinion prevailed among the leaders of the royalist party met in council at the Hague to debate on the proposals of Sir Joseph Douglas, the Scots ambassador. Some urged the young king to refuse the humiliating offers of the Covenanters, while others, deeming it advisable to make any sacrifice for the sake of gaining a footing in Scotland, counselled the king to accept the proposals, and to look forward to a prosperous future for placing himself in a more advantageous condition. But as things wore a favourable aspect in Ireland at that period, the king determined to make an attempt to land there, and therefore refused to comply with the offers of the Scottish parliament, and set out for France, in hopes of engaging the French government to assist him in his enterprise. In the mean time, the Duke of Montrose employed himself in levying an army in Holland, with the view of immediately proceeding to England, and regaining for his young master his rightful inheritance by force of arms, and for this purpose took up his head-quarters at Amsterdam. Lord Fawcett's loyal zeal led him most eagerly to second the efforts of his great colleague, and Urica shared his enthusiasm.

No sacrifice was deemed too great by Lord Fawcett for the attainment of this glorious end, a great part of his property had been confiscated, owing to the share he had taken in the late commotions, but he unhesitatingly devoted all he could command to this noble cause, and Urica, who entered eagerly into all her husband's plans, was so deeply infected by his ardour, that she placed her princely fortune at his disposal. It was not in the nature of a man of Lord Fawcett's ardent temperament to be checked by prudential considerations. He had embarked heart and soul in this great enterprise, and his sanguine imagination never admitted a doubt of success. He therefore agreed to accept the assistance Urica so generously offered, and felt the less scruple in doing so, that several of the European powers had engaged to furnish the Duke of Montrose with subsidies, he obtained a promise that Urica's fortune should be repaid from these funds, and thus he merely considered it as a loan, which would be of the greatest service to the cause, by removing the difficulties arising from the want of ready money.

Yet, notwithstanding this assistance, the obstacles and delays, which were of almost daily occurrence, sorely tried the patience of the leaders, added to the annoyances caused by broken promises, hollow friends, and lukewarm adherents. Many a time Lord Fawcett would return home from a council at the Duke of Montrose's with an aching heart and a clouded brow, and there was but one place where he could find relief for his troubled spirits, and gain new courage for the prosecution of his arduous labours—that was by Urica's side. The true greatness of her mind was now displayed, the noble qualities which had slumbered within her bosom were called into full play, her husband found in her a friend and sup-

porter, whose cool judgment and discrimination could be surpassed by few of the opposite sex

One morning, as he was returning from an unsatisfactory meeting, he was surprised, on entering his wife's apartment, to hear her gay voice echoed by the merry laughing tones of a child. He raised the curtain, and saw his beautiful Urica seated on an arm-chair in the middle of the room, playing with a lovely little girl of about six years old, who sat on her lap, and whose bewitching grace and radiant beauty caused him to stand for a moment lost in admiration.

As his eye wandered a little further, he observed a pale, emaciated female beside Urica, utterly absorbed in contemplating the charming group formed by Urica and the child. She had bent forward thoughtfully over the arm of the chair, unconscious of the tears that trickled down her cheeks.

Fawcett did not require much penetration to guess that this must be the unfortunate cousin Angela, of whom he had heard so much, and her little Floris, and he could not resist the temptation of playing the part of a spy a little longer, in order to take a more attentive survey of this new cousin.

Though Angela had even then no pretensions to good looks, the changes that had taken place in her mind were of so important a nature, that they could not fail to exercise a favourable influence on her manners and the expression of her countenance. Her attire was simple, yet dignified, and conformable with the fashion of the times. She wore a dress of black velvet, a cap of the finest Mechlin lace, which closely shrouded her face, and a long black lace veil that fell back over her shoulders. This attire, utterly devoid of ornament, did not seem in the slightest degree burdensome to her, her attitude was easy and unrestrained, though exceedingly touching, for she seemed to have forgotten everything around her, in the happiness she felt at seeing Urica tenderly and affectionately clasp her child in her arms.

Though Lord Fawcett was far better pleased with the appearance of his newly-found relative than he expected, he could not suppress his astonishment at the thought of her being the mother of the angelic child. Urica was overwhelming with caresses—he was struck with the surprising likeness between this child and Urica, and could not help thinking, that a stranger would not have hesitated to consider her its mother.

He now drew aside the curtains, and so quickly traversed the apartment, that the two ladies had no time to rise in order to greet him.

Ere they well knew that he was in the room, he had seated himself on a low stool at the feet, and taking Angela's hand with the most engaging warmth and sincerity of manner, said, with a smile, "Welcome, cousin Angela! I pray you receive me kindly, as a relative, and accept the assurance of my most sincere esteem and affectionate interest."

The little Floris quickly dispelled the momentary embarrassment with which all the party had been seized, as turning round she fixed her beautiful eyes on Lord Fawcett, still glistening with joy and delight at Urica's playful kindness, and stretching out her hand to his face, she cried, "Are you our cousin?"

Every one laughed at this, and poor Angela felt somewhat relieved. She timidly returned the kind pressure of Lord Fawcett's hand, and em-

boldened by maternal love, said, pointing to Floris, "Accept her as my intercessor. She will at once reward you for your kindness better than I ever can—and she will atone for the wrongs I have inflicted on my family."

"Oh, never speak thus again, Angela," cried Urica, "if you would save me from the pangs of self-accusation. It cuts me to the heart to hear you thus pronounce yourself in fault."

"No, no, mamma!" said Floris, "you are not in fault—indeed you are not." And throwing her arms round her mother's neck, she evinced the greatest anxiety to remove the sorrowful expression of Angela's countenance by her affectionate caresses.

"I see she is not only as lovely, but as good as an angel," whispered Lord Fawcett to his wife, and Urica's absent air, as she looked up to him, proved that she was wholly engrossed in the contemplation of Angela's child.

Floris seemed to have taken a decided fancy to Lord Fawcett, for she devoted her attention to him during all the time he stayed in his wife's apartments, and evinced her admiration in the most *naïve* and engaging manner. She became the bond of union between these two families, so utterly dissimilar in every respect. She spent day after day with Urica, and as her mother, out of consideration for Van der Néess, did not like often to leave her house, Floris soon submitted to stay by herself with her beloved aunt. Everything she saw there flattered her taste for splendour and magnificence, and she felt as happy and contented as a fish in its element.

But though Urica was in the constant habit of receiving Angela and her daughter in her own house, she could not for a long time overcome her feelings so far as to visit the old house of the Purmurands.

At length one day, when Angela came to take home her little daughter, she suddenly said to her, "Will you receive me to-night beneath the old lime-tree in your court of pleasure?"

Poor Angela was so overcome with joy and emotion at receiving Urica's promise to grant the wish she had so long cherished in vain, that she could only answer by a flood of tears.

But what a sensation she created at home, when she returned with the news of Lady Fawcett's approaching visit. Van der Néess had expected this event so long, and so much too soon, that he no longer reckoned upon it. On the first days after Urica's arrival, he had lain in wait beside her house, as well as beside his own, because he suspected the time of his absence would be selected for this visit, and he succeeded in persuading himself that his connexion with his noble cousin was now established on a proper footing, and the past ought to be forgotten and forgiven. He deemed it incumbent on him not to suffer her airs, in case she chose to play any, and make an attempt to avoid him again, of which he was warned by a secret presentiment which he could not suppress.

But for some time past he seemed neither to have wished nor expected this event. He was unable altogether to prevent Angela's visits to her aunt, but he would at times break out into contemptuous speeches on the subject of disorderly conduct or extravagance. He often called suddenly to Angela when she was quietly at work, and inquired what she had done at her aunt's—whether she had been attacked for money, betrayed any secrets, or made rash promises? Then, in a fit of his old frantic rage, he would run about the room, shaking his fist in the air, and talk of beggars,

plunderers, and fortune-hunters, and threaten to treat them as they deserved

Angela did not pay much attention to such ebullitions, for at first she innocently set them down to his renewed fears of the separation which had formerly been projected. At a later period, when she had been admitted into the confidence of her relatives, and was aware of the steps Urica had been obliged to take in order to place her fortune at her husband's disposal, Angela was seized with a sudden apprehension lest Van der Néess, who kept a sharp look-out on all that was going on in the great money market, might, by his artful cunning, have spied out what Urica was so anxious to conceal from general notice

In consequence of this, she watched him closely when she communicated to him the tidings of Urica's approaching visit, and her fears were not diminished by his manner

He burst into a loud fit of laughter when he heard of it, and grew very red. "Well, my little Angela," he cried, "let her come, and her lord earl too, if he likes. I am not the man to bear malice, she has nothing to fear from me, and can neither bring honour nor shame on a man like Van der Néess. Circumstances are changed," he added, drawing himself up haughtily. "Certain people would give much now-a-days to possess the solid wealth they once sneered at, for when our own possessions are about to dissolve in empty air, we find out the value of other people's." Yes, indeed, my little Angela, that is the way, though you stare at me in such surprise, but say, has your proud aunt said nothing to you—eh? What makes her come just now? Don't you understand, little Angela? Ah, ah! I'm up to her," cried he, jumping up gaily, "the knife is at her throat, and that has sharpened her eyes to find out the house she once despised. D'ye think she would still refuse to take the hand she once refused to touch? D'ye think so? Look here! I'll tell you what, if Van der Néess chose to be a fool, and do what the dainty dear would wish—if he chose to put that into his rejected hand which her ladyship is in want of—take my word for it, she would draw off her glove with a bland smile, and lay her little soft velvet hand in mine. But," he continued, in an angry and scornful tone, and making a low bow, "then it would be my part to turn my back and snub her ladyship! Oho! Van der Néess well knows the weight of his hand, and this proud fool shall not make it any lighter."

"Will you tell me what you mean, Van der Néess?" said Angela. "You have certainly said many harsh wicked things, and yet I suspect you are so carried away by your passion, that you do not exactly know what you mean. But you will understand, that I am anxious you should be in a proper and composed state of mind when my aunt arrives—in case you intend to be present during her visit—or receive her when she comes."

"Depend upon it, Angela, your proud lady aunt will not dispense with Van der Néess's company to day. If you like to see some fun, I'll keep out of the way when first she arrives. What will you bet me, that she will not look around for me to-day, and express a wish that her dear nephew may be summoned. And then for a volley of polite speeches to make poor me forget how I have been treated? D'ye hear, you little simpleton, you can't understand or conceive all this. I'm a good hand at giving you riddles to guess, am't I? Ha! ha! Show me the man at the

Exchange, or at the markets, who is capable of keeping Van der Néess in the dark "

" Well, well, be it so " said Angela, making use of a little stratagem, " as I cannot understand you, it is possible you may be right in thinking that my aunt desires to see you, and it would much gratify me to see her pay you due respect as master of the house Yet we can only ascertain that, if you keep to your intention of absenting yourself at first "

" Certainly," cried Van der Néess, " I have made up my mind to do so, and I shall not change my plans 'Pon my word, I am curious to know how your lady aunt will set about it, when she takes to flattery But look here' you will find out, then, what stuff Van der Néess is made of, and don't fancy you can do anything with me—mind! not a word—or I shall teach you both that I know what is due to myself "

" I have not the slightest doubt that you know what is due and advantageous to yourself, and, certainly, I have given you but little cause to enforce any severe precepts " said Angela " But no more of that now You had better withdraw, since it is your wish to do so, otherwise my aunt will surprise us, and I shall not be able to judge whether her sentiments are indeed such as you imagine "

Van der Néess complied with this request, and, as was often the case with him scarcely knew whether he was in a transport of delight or rage The transition from the first state to the latter was so rapid with him, that those around him had learnt to dread his paroxysms of joy, since experience had proved to them that little good was to be gained by them, and that his usual sulky, morose manner, was alone to be considered as a warrant for some degree of peace and security

Although Urica did not repent of her promise to visit Angela, an indefinite feeling of discomfort took possession of her mind at the thought of entering this gloomy domestic circle, and seeing Van der Néess, whom she so cordially hated, by Angela's side

Hitherto she had only seen her poor niece in her own house, apart from the revolting companion of her noble, self sacrificing life But now an involuntary sigh escaped her as the carriage stopped before the old house of the Purmurands, she had invited Mynherr van Marseeven to meet her there, and back her in the object of her visit, she now thought of him with a sort of anxiety, and wished he were there to protect her

But she felt greatly relieved when she saw Angela and Floris come forth alone to meet her, and on entering the old house, so full of painful reminiscences, no one appeared to greet her but old Susa She affectionately accosted this faithful domestic, and pressed into her hands a considerable present of money, which she had long destined for her

A weight was removed from her heart, when she entered the court without seeing the dreadful apparition of the master of the house, she sat down beside her niece beneath the old lime-tree, and they both indulged for a while in the painful feelings which the remembrance of the past called forth

Urica at length broke silence " My dear Angela," she said, " will you send your little Floris to amuse herself for a while with the flowers yonder? I have something of importance to communicate to you, and I think she had better not remain here, for what I have to say concerns her nearly "

Susa hereupon charged Floris to gather a nosegay for her aunt Urica,

and finally persuaded her to retire to the banqueting-room, and practise a new dance to the tune of Caas fiddle, in order to perform it before her aunt in the court, when the moon should have risen

Urica seized Angela's hand, and said, in a tone of deep emotion—

“You know that it has not pleased Heaven to bless our union with children, when England has recovered from its present state of anarchy and confusion, my husband's children will be amply provided for. The birth of your daughter, and the frequent dangers to which we were exposed by the wailike operations of my husband, whom I sometimes accompanied in his expeditions, induced us to think of our death, and Lord Fawcett insisted on my disposing of my property in favour of my own relations—that is to say, of your daughter. I must confess to you my weakness, the thought of making a will in favour of a Van der Ness was extremely painful to me, and I fell into melancholy contemplations on the subject, till one day I happened to take up the letter in which you announced to me the birth of this child, and said further, that at her baptism, when you gave her the name of Floris, after our Spanish ancestor, Madame van Marseveen had, in virtue of her right as sponsor, given her the name of Casambort, while her husband, the second sponsor, had by a similar title, added that of Groneveldt. This did not make much impression on me at the time, as I considered it as a thing of no consequence, done merely with the view of pleasing us all. But now that my thoughts had perhaps taken the same direction as theirs, it struck me forcibly, and after consulting with Lord Fawcett, I wrote to Mynherr van Marseveen on the subject. A succession of disastrous occurrences took place at that time, we were obliged to leave England, and it was not till long after that I received Mynherr van Marseveen's answer, which had missed us repeatedly, and been sent after us all over France. He stated, that both he and his wife had at the time conceived the possibility of restoring Floris to the rights of her family name, since crises had come to their knowledge, where families of high rank and ancient names, who during the civil wars had lost their rights by being dispersed or impoverished, had succeeded in re-establishing their prerogatives. Mynherr van Marseveen went on to say, that the course to be pursued for such an end, was first to procure an attestation of the justice of the claims from the states-general, and then to have them confirmed by the Emperor of Germany, who would cause a new deed or certificate to be made out, attesting the validity and genuineness of the old claims of the family, and thus any interruption that might have taken place in the regular line, would be rendered of no import, and the person in question entitled to resume the family name and enjoy all the privileges thereto belonging. You will suspect now, my dearest Angela,” continued Urica, more tenderly, as she observed how the blood went and came on Angela's countenance, while her eyes were cast on the ground, and a slight tremor agitated her frame, “you will now suspect what I have ventured to do without asking your consent! Mynherr van Marseveen was in possession of all your papers, he sent them to me at my request, for you know my husband soon after repaired to the German court. I succeeded in obtaining a private audience of the emperor, and myself related to him your hard fate, and your heroic resolution not to sever the marriage-bonds which deprived

you of your rights I then petitioned him to reinstate the daughter in the privileges to which she could lay claim through her mother, and obtained his gracious consent. Mynherr van Marseeven then took the necessary steps with the states-general in my name, the document was drawn up in due form, and laid before the emperor, who ratified it, according to his promise. Here is this document. I have brought it for your inspection, and pray you to peruse it."

But Angela, with a last effort, pushed away this important parchment deed, with its weighty seals, her pale lips moved, but she was unable to utter a word, and sank back into the arms of her affrighted aunt.

Urica gazed on her for a moment, uncertain how to act, but she soon decided it would be most expedient to conceal this natural agitation from the other inmates of the house, since she felt assured Angela would soonest recover in her arms, and thus escape the annoyance of questions and remarks.

She therefore merely produced her smelling-bottle, and unfastened Angela's dress to give her air, and was soon rewarded for her exertions by her niece's returning consciousness. When she opened her eyes, her first glance was fixed inquiringly on Urica, and as all the past flashed on her memory, she burst into tears.

"These tears will relieve your oppressed heart," said Urica, kindly, "but as they prevent you from reading, I will communicate to you the contents of this document. It states that the daughter of Angela van Groneveldt, descended by the mother's side from the house of Casambort, by the father's from that of Groneveldt, and united in marriage to the buigher and merchant, Jacob van der Néess—that this daughter, at the request of her great aunt, the Countess Fawcett—by birth and marriage Countess van Casambort—is now invested with full and indisputable rights to bear the name and arms, and enjoy the privileges of the noble families of Groneveldt and Casambort, that she is elevated to the rank of countess, and that no interruption that may have taken place in the regular line of succession shall be able to invalidate her claims. This document may either be made public at once, or kept secret for the time being, according to the will of her friends and relatives. She is entitled to produce it either before or after her majority, and even if she should never make use of it, she will still, in virtue of this document, irrevocably be entitled to the name and title of—*Floriss, Countess van Casambort*."

"Casambort!" faltered Angela, "Casambort! and no longer Van der Néess, like her father and mother? Is she to be separated from her parents—and the name she bears by the will of Heaven, to be taken from her as a stain? Shall she learn to look upon it as a disgrace, from which her friends have saved her, and yet be our child—the daughter of those who must retain this name?"

Angela would have been stifled by her emotion had she not thus given vent to her feelings of anguish. She was unable to reflect on the impression her words might produce, for she was urged on by an irresistible impulse to express what had passed in her thoughts during the moments of torture in which she had been forced to listen to her aunt's account.

"Angela, Angela," cried Urica, in a tone of the greatest alarm and surprise, as the document fell from her hands, "is it possible that this affair should have called forth such feelings in you!"

Angela threw herself at her aunt's feet with a cry of anguish, and hiding her face in her hands, cried, in a transport of excitement—

"Oh forgive me, forgive me, I have again wounded your feelings. Alas, I am destined to cause you sorrow, to frustrate your kindest intentions! Yet, have pity on me, and remember that none of the pleasures of this world have fallen to my share, that when first my mind was aroused to consciousness, I found that the happiness of this life was lost to me for ever—remember, that nothing was left to me but confidence in God and the hope that I was acting well in His sight, aunt! God in His mercy sowed the seeds of peace and resignation in my bosom, they grew up and gained strength with every day of my life, I learnt to overcome myself and the world, which tempted and tormented me, and I will flow humbly confess to you, that I have learnt that those who live in close communion with God, and with Him alone, require a clearness of perception which enables them infallibly to discern between right and wrong, and thus I—even I,—poor, insignificant, neglected being that I am, often distinguish what is right sooner than others, and I feel as if God himself pointed it out to me. Aunt, when first you spoke to me, a great emotion overpowered me, for, like the prophet of old, I struggled with God, and he threw me down, but when I awoke, he had revealed himself unto me."

"Angela—enthusiast" cried Urica, with a strange mixture of feeling. "Whither are your thoughts wandering?"

"Can I be in an error?" asked Angela, throwing her arms affectionately around Urica. "Know you not that our heavenly Father does not give stones to those who ask him for bread, and would you have me believe that he would do so to me who, like a living prayer, have watched for him, and sought him unceasingly, who at length learnt to believe firmly that He must show me the way to Himself? Or do you mean a virtuous feeling when you speak of enthusiasm, and not what the world designates by that term—a hollow, empty delusion of the sensual heart?"

"Angela, dearest! what are you thinking of?" said Urica, gently. "Oh, trust me, my heart could never blame you, nay, more, I begin to think my worldly zeal has led me into error, and that your simple, truthful views have left me far behind."

"Ah, who shall say that?" said Angela, humbly. "But, my dearest aunt, I pray you give me the assurance that you are not in anger with me, and that you have some pity for the inward conviction which renders me averse to your plans."

"Averse, then," cried Urica, startled anew by this plain declaration. "Are you really averse to them? But do you know that such a decree is irrevocable?"

"Not more irrevocable," said Angela, with surprising energy, "than the fact that this little girl, whom God has so richly endowed, was born here—beneath the roof of her father's—of the mother who bears his name, and that she has thus found the place which her Heavenly Father destined her to fill in this world."

"And yet, Angela," returned Urica, relaxing a little in zeal, "you look upon this child as the bond of union between our families—as the means of atoning to us and to you for the injuries that have been inflicted on you, and it is partly for this end you seek to develop in her all the advantages of body and mind of which you consider yourself so cruelly defrauded."

"Is that not a noble ambition?" cried Angela, "one that God has per-

mitted to exist in my heart beside my love for him? Ah, my dear aunt, to train up a lovely girl, so as to make her a comfort to us all, and a pledge of gratitude to the God who gave her to me. This is a noble aim—a hope to which I fondly cling, and which I cannot relinquish, yet I must be on the watch to guard against evil. How could I educate my child to be a good daughter if I suffered her to become a countess and bear another name? She would scarcely cease to be a child ere she would discover that her father was so low a person, that his name was considered to affix a stain to her, and should not I thus lead her into temptation, and myself instil into her heart what the power of nature may perhaps preserve her from—contempt of her father?”

“I can no longer refute your arguments,” said Urica. “Let us consult with Mynherr van Marseeven, he promised to meet me here, in order to settle the official part of the business with your husband. He must have been in the house some time, for I heard him knock and enter while you were insensible. Perhaps he has been conferring with Van der Néess before coming to us.”

“Heaven forbid,” exclaimed Angela, in evident alarm. “I trust Van der Néess knows nothing about it, for the thought of profit or advantage of whatsoever kind is a sore temptation to him, and he is apt to be obstinate in error, add to which, he has been thrown into a state of great excitement by your visit. It is by a mere chance I have been able to keep him from us so long.”

Meanwhile, Van der Néess had stationed himself at the window of one of the upper apartments, whence he could see the Countess Urica enter without being observed himself, and he had watched her attentively, in the expectation of her turning to look for him, and evincing a desire to salute him.

Van der Néess was distinguished among his brethren in usury for his superior cunning and shrewdness, and from being in the constant habit of negotiating large sums, and making important calculations, had acquired great experience and a high reputation at the money-market. He had in consequence been consulted by his brother usurers in the matter of advancing money on the Countess Urica's property, and had not hesitated to give the usual assistance, as long as the case appeared to him perfectly safe. The frequency of her demands proved how quickly the money was disbursed, and Van der Néess had for some time previous withdrawn himself from the business, under the impression that the greater part of her fortune must be dissipated. Thus he could ascribe Urica's sudden determination to pay the visit she had so long delayed, to no other motive than her intention of effecting a loan from him—the rich Van der Néess—whose wealth was then a public theme. This thought filled him with malicious joy, for he made it a principle never to lend money except on the most perfect securities, and with the certainty of reaping extraordinary profits. On the present occasion, he determined to give a decided refusal, he rejoiced at the prospects of revenging himself on the person he most hated in the world, because she had treated him with the deepest contempt, and most proudly repelled his advances.

He anxiously awaited the summons, concerning which he had betted with Angela, and his impatience waxed stronger with every moment, but on looking out of the windows into the court, he perceived, to his dismay, that the two ladies were conversing together with the greatest ease, with-

out in the least appearing to miss him. The idea of losing his expected triumph was insupportable to him, he rushed away from the window, coursed all over the house, then stood irresolute—shifting from one leg to another, yet no one appeared to summon him. At length his attention was arrested by a loud knock at the door. Mynherr van Marseeven and the sheriff, Conclius Hooft, entered, and Van der Neess then felt persuaded that his conjectures would prove correct, and that the proud countess had deputed the mighty burgomaster to prepare him for her request.

A ludicrous struggle took place in Van der Neess' bosom. his natural cowardice, and his miserable servile disposition, instinctively urged him to cringe and fawn before Mynherr van Marseeven, that mighty dignitary of the town, and yet he thought it consistent with his dignity to give himself the airs of a rich, haughty man, and had firmly resolved to turn off any proposal that should be made to him, in the name of the Countess Urica, with offensive remarks and scornful allusions.

The first address of the chief burgomaster was certainly calculated to confirm his suspicions, for he expressed a wish to speak to Van der Neess in private. Pool Floris, Caas, and the fiddle were immediately expelled from the old banqueting-room. Van der Neess, with an air of repulsive, awkward officiousness, invited his distinguished guests to enter.

Mynherr van Marseeven then opened the case—in a manner somewhat different from what Van der Neess had anticipated—by acquainting him of the testamentary dispositions of the Countess of Fawcett in favour of his daughter Floris.

The chief burgomaster was somewhat disconcerted to find that this communication, which he had expected would produce a great effect on Van der Neess, was heard by the latter with an air of indifference, and elicited no reply. The truth was, that Van der Neess looked on it in another light. "Bah," thought he, "a noble donation that—when I know that my lady, the generous Countess of Fawcett has taken good care to clear out her chests and coffers!" Thus, he considered it merely as a feat, resorted to with the view of bribing him to agree to a loan.

In fact, Mynherr van Marseeven was not as well informed as Van der Neess of the precarious condition of Urica's fortune, though he had no doubt she must have given up some considerable sums to her husband.

"Well," said Van der Neess at length, on being asked his opinion regarding the testamentary dispositions, "I think the matter might have been settled without any questions or formalities. Angela is my wife—there is no disputing that—and Angela's daughter is the natural heiress of her aunt—methinks there was no need of a will to make that as clear as day. But as to the rest, I know the laws will or no will—our lady aunt is not so old as that she may not yet have natural heirs, and then—then we shall have had all this fuss for nothing." Thus saying, he burst into a savage, scornful laugh, and flattered himself he had proved his shrewdness.

"Van der Neess!" said Mynherr van Marseeven, "you forget that the Countess Fawcett's fortune is entirely at her own disposal, and that the degree of your relationship does not warrant your daughter in making any lawful claims on it, and consequently she is solely indebted to the love and kindness of her aunt for this disposition."

"Well, it may be so for anything I care," said Van der Neess, rub-

bing his hands up and down his plush inexpressibles, and swinging himself backwards and forwards in his chair "She'll soon manage to give an account of her fortune, I warrant, let her bequeath it to whom she likes, I do not care a doit for it," he continued, grinning from ear to ear, "and if this generous aunt thinks she will gain many thanks from me, or get some advantage out of me, she has greatly mistaken your humble servant, for nothing that occurs in Amsterdam and at the money-market escapes me—and, pon my word, I've always thought that those who would make a will must first have something to leave Ha, hā, ha!" cried he, laughing at his own wit, and winking knowingly to Mynherr van Marseeven.

The latter was inclined to think that Van der Neess might have better means than he himself of judging of the amount of certain large sums taken up by Urica, and that hence his suspicious, fearful disposition led him to despair of ever possessing the property offered to him At all events, the ungrateful manner in which the first part of this communication had been received by Van der Neess did not encourage him to proceed with the rest, since he felt persuaded Van der Neess would attach far less importance to his next offer, and the prospect of its being rudely rejected was painful to the good burgomaster's feelings, as it seemed an insult to his high station

Yet he felt that the communication must be made, and having exchanged a look of mutual understanding with Cornelius Hooft, who could scarcely suppress a smile at the false position they stood towards this brutal fellow, he overcame his reluctance so far as to proceed

"In order to give your daughter a right to the estates of Casambort," said he, "it was necessary to procure for her those privileges of rank and station which will entitle her to make a claim on these estates, and thus, the Countess Fawcett having first obtained the consent of the states-general, has procured from his Imperial Majesty a document, authorising our daughter to bear the rank and name of Countess van Casambort"

Van der Neess' provoking indifference had suddenly given way as he listened to these tidings His eyes seemed ready to start out of his head he sat perfectly motionless, and, bending forward in his chair, stared fixedly at the speaker Mynherr van Marseeven was fully satisfied with the effect he had produced When he ceased speaking, Van der Néess uttered one of his savage cries, then bursting into a hoarse laugh, ejaculated, in a loud voice,

'The deuce! That was no bad thought of our noble aunt So my precious child is really to be a countess, and bear the noble name of her proud lady aunt Well, that is something to speak of, and it will cost me no money either I always thought of buying a title for her, if I should ever be rich enough, for it is a thing many do who acquire wealth, and I wanted to prevent her grand relations from sneering at my Floris But where was I to get the money for such a thing? It's no trifling expense However, if our lady aunt does not pay all the expenses, it's no affair of mine I have had no hand in it, for I have nothing to spare for such things"

Here Van der Neess' nervous horror of expense suddenly seized on his mind, and, starting from his chair, he ran wildly about the room, uttering incoherent sounds, and thus presenting a dreadful yet burlesque picture, which, to Mynherr van Marseeven and his companion, was a novel, yet surprising sight

"Or perhaps," cried he, growing more furious every moment, "perhaps this is the snare into which poor Van der Néess is to be caught, and the lady countess expects that, out of gratitude for this little story, Van der Néess is to loosen the strings of his purse whenever she whistles, till all the scanty property he has so hardly and honestly earned is scattered to the winds, like her own. Look here!" he shrieked, apparently no longer conscious of what he said or did, "it is just as if two thieves were to break into a house after they had managed to throw the owner off his guard, and fall to and empty his purse, and then say to him, 'Thank us for having made you a beggar!'"

Van der Néess continued for some time in this state, uttering savage cries, and making frantic gestures, for this was one of the numerous instances of the sudden transition of feeling to which he was subject—from a transport of joy, into which he had been thrown by the tidings of Floris's elevation to rank, to a paroxysm of rage, because he did not permit himself the full enjoyment of any happiness, since he could not divest himself of the fear that he should be made to pay for it.

For a moment the two gentlemen were silent, unable to overcome their surprise at this spectacle. Then Cornelius Hooft, with sudden energy, struck his fist on the table with such force that everything shook around him, and, in an authoritative voice, commanded Van der Néess to sit down instantly.

THE PRISON COACH

A covenant,—we will have these things set down by lawful counsel, and lest the bargain should catch cold and starve, I will fetch my gold and have our two wagers recorded.

SHAKESPEARE

To such as are wholly unpressed for time, and not caring to turn each day perhaps to its best account, by accomplishing much within a short space, there is no way that a small party of from two to four individuals can travel more comfortably than they do in Italy per vettura. The vettura is an exceedingly capacious east, and well-lined carriage on four wheels, with ample pockets for bread and cheese, or a roast joint of meat, or chickens, with abundant conveniences for a dozen or more bottles, hooks for garments, racks for canes and umbrellas, and, not unfrequently, a well secured small bookshelf, occupies a snug place in the corner of the vehicle. The carriage itself, drawn by four spanking, well groomed horses, with harness attempting some relics of by-gone finery, and traces of rope—of which, by-the-way, the least we say the better, suffice it that it be strong, and answereth the purpose. Our driver on the occasion to which we refer was Giuseppe Alcantari, and never was worthy of the whip more proud of his position or vain of his vocation. Devoted to his calling, there were few of his time to compare with this hero of the road, and truly, when we consider for a moment the multitudinous nature of his callings, we may be surprised that "one small head" was equal to the task. In addition to the cares of his cattle and carriage—enough, in truth, for one man's time—it was his bounden duty also to provide for those of the human species, whoever they might chance to be, that fate had given to him as passengers. These, resigning themselves to the *dolce far niente* sentiment of the Italian clime, "take no heed for the morrow, what they shall eat or what they shall drink," but yielding

themselves implicitly to the control of Giuseppe, feel, with every prolonged crack of the whip, that they were more wise in so doing than they possibly could have been had they relied on their own resources in a country where they were perfect strangers. Multitudinous, in truth, are the calling. of *Il Condottiera del Vettura*, not to revert to the cares consequent on horses and carriage, he is the grand provider, steward and caterer, for all his passengers. Early breakfasts, *café latte*, the *dejeuner à la fourchette*, more substantial at noon, and *il pranzo grande* at seven o'clock of some eight or ten covers of well-cooked dishes, all come through his providing,—like the great magician in Eastern fable, the viands come, as it were, at the moving of his wand. And then, too, the bargaining—the petty dealing and higgling so necessary, yet so annoying, for there is no country on earth where so much is asked, and so little taken, as Italy. The rooms we occupied, with their beds, fuel, and all conveniences,—turnpikes and *doganerie*, *lasciare andares* and *lasciare residentes*, with fees to servants and tolls to bridges, were all matters for Giuseppe, while our boxes, trunks, portmanteaus, carpet bags, writing-desks, umbrellas and canes, were as safe under his care as if they were deposited in your banker's vault, and under his own patent lock and key.

Our travelling party of four gentlemen were peculiarly fortunate at the time to which we refer in the selection of our carriage, it happening to be one that had been expressly fitted up by a Florentine nobleman for his own especial use for a peculiar occasion, and as there is a story chiming with the choice of a coach, we will at once begin it here.

On an occasion of some festive nature a meeting of gentlemen took place at Florence, when the conversation happening to turn upon horses, carriages, and modes of Italian travel, as compared with those of other lands, a wager was laid by the Marquis *San Pisano* with one of the gentlemen of the party that he would travel alone, by *vettura*, from Florence to Rome by the Sienna route, and back again to Florence by the Perugian, without once getting out of the carriage on any pretext whatever until he had again returned back to Florence. The time to be occupied, the usual one of from twelve to fourteen days, or longer, if he chose, and to remain at Rome as long as he pleased, provided that he quitted not his carriage prison. According to the custom of Tuscany, the conditions of the wager, which was for the sum of 1000 *scudi*, about 200*l* sterling, were duly entered, witnessed, and registered at the office of *Del Contratto Civile*—a mode of proceeding by which all wagers are legalised in Tuscany, and the losing party are as much compelled to pay as they would be a just debt of any other nature. And now to the necessary preparations for departure.

Giuseppe Alcantari, well known throughout all Italy by those that travel, and much respected for his honesty and fidelity, was fortunately at home, and at once summoned to wait upon the marquis. On apprising him of the nature of the duty he had undertaken to perform, Giuseppe was made acquainted with all the circumstances of the contract, and was at once chosen to be the conductor. He forthwith accompanied the marquis, that he might select an easy and capacious carriage, and have all the necessary alterations made that were indispensable to the comfort and convenience of his noble prisoner. The carriage chosen, suitable workmen were immediately set to work, and after the performance of the wager, this very carriage became in turn ours for a like journey, though not under similar circumstances. But to our tale. Various were the

kinds of handicraft necessary to fit out the vehicle for its destined journey. In the first place, immediately underneath the seat of the conductor, a stout iron-hooped cask, capable of containing three or four gallons, was secured, and leading from this into one corner of the interior of the carriage was a zinc tube, terminating with a customary turncock. This was to contain the necessary supply of water, and Giuseppe was instructed, as a part of his daily duty, to have the cask filled every morning while they were absent for it should have been mentioned, that no supplies either of food or drink were to be furnished after starting on the journey, and consequently the marquis was compelled to victual his carriage for the whole voyage at once—the renewal of water daily being the only exception.

And now for the bed. Longitudinally with the carriage, and occupying its entire length, a narrow sacking bedstead, with hinges to turn it up during the day, was fitted with a hair mattress and all the necessary adjuncts of pillow, bolster, and counterpane, and things thereunto belonging, even to the boot jack, slippers, and hooks. A looking-glass, to enable the marquis to carry on the process of shaving, was nicely fitted into one side of the coach, while, underneath, a toilet-table was arranged, after the fashion of the bedstead. The victualling department was confided to a *Marchand des Comestibles Française* who catered for crowned heads, as being more skilled in estimating the quantity and variety that one individual might require on such an expedition, and boiled hams, collared beef, *pigeon à la volaille*, *dindon truffé*, and *vitello a la mongiana*, with meat pies and poultry puddings, preserved vegetables and fruits both fresh and dried, with confectionery in abundance, and various wines of rich flavour, *à la discretion*, made up, on the whole, an outfit that was no less worthy of the marquis than the man. With a well-selected library of choice authors, nicely fitted upon shelves in one corner of the carriage, with pens, ink, and paper in profusion, and ever so many pounds of wax candles, adapted in size to the neat candelabras in every corner of the coach, not only to cheer the solitude of night, but at the same time to light up “his parlour, his kitchen, and hall.” With all these, and many other unmentioned *agrémens de voyage*, who would not willingly have placed themselves in the position of the marquis? And what difficulty or hindrance, our reader will say, can reasonably prevent his fulfilment of the contract? This is certainly most true. There was nothing difficult in the passive performance of the wager, but it must be mentioned that the marquis was a gentleman who, from boyhood, had evinced a peculiar restlessness of manner—ever active, constantly moving about, and seeming to possess a nervous organisation of extreme susceptibility to action—an almost unnatural irritability characterising all his muscles of voluntary motion. And then, too, he had been brought up from his infancy, as all Italian children are, with the luxury of many servants to minister to his wants, so that it was supposed to be one of the things almost impossible for him to make even the necessary arrangements beforehand, or that he could on any terms consent to attend to all his personal requirements for so long a time, giving up, too, as he necessarily must, the charms of society, of which he was so distinguished an ornament and lover.

What would the world say, and more than that, what did the wits say? *Per Baccho!* What! the gay Marquis San Pisano become a hermit? turn *valet de place* to himself, become a Florentine Diogenes, and live in a coach? But it was too late to recede, the wager had been announced

to the public *per avviso*, and the marquis's opponent in the wager, better knowing the *ennui* and care-consuming thoughts that ever visit us when a highly social being like the marquis is left wholly to himself, had relied on these sentiments, rather than any impossibility in the feat itself, as the ground on which he hoped to be the winner, especially, too, as the sum at stake was not immense. It is certainly most true, that to the noblemen of some lands the 200*l* might seem to be no great temptation still it is, nevertheless, an amount of ready coin not at all times to be found in the coffers of the nobles of Italy, and without question had its weight at this time.

The morning for departure has arrived. According to custom, the registered *wiget* having been duly announced in the *Gazetta de Firenze* and other journals, many of the friends of the traveller, besides a multitude of the curious and idle, were assembled around the Porta del Palazzo San Pisanio, where, at six o'clock in the morning, the carriage, with its equipments complete, and its conductor, honest Giuseppe, were both on the eve of departure. Nothing is ever done in Italy without bustle, confusion, and noise, and the snorting of horses, yelping of dogs, grunts, gutturals of the *facchino* and ejaculations of the curious lookers-on as box after box and trunk upon trunk was packed away and strapped down for the journey, could only be exceeded by the roar of *addios, bon viaggios*, that greeted the ears of the marquis as he suddenly sprang into the carriage, and off and away rattled the wheels, and crack, crack went the whip, now in its accurately measured coil taking off the head of a startled hen, or inflicting an almost equal penalty on some vagrant dog, with a precision known only to the initiated in cruelty as well as whip-cracking.

Fairly *en route*, the first day or two wiled away pleasantly enough, what with the alternate enjoyment of some favourite author—the sitting long at his solitary meals—cutting away slice upon slice of his savoury viands, like a voluntary Robinson Crusoe in a coach, and while sipping his delicate native wines, he began to consider the fulfilment of the terms of his wager as an easy task. The machinery of his bed was excellent and easily arranged, and when the carriage was locked up for the night in the coach-house, he lighted up his palace and sat till bedtime reading or writing—"the monarch of all he surveyed."

With the third and fourth day of travel the carriage wended on its way through the grand scenery of the mountains of La Scala, but as the whole route had frequently been traversed before by the marquis in many hunting expeditions and on other occasions, he derived little gratification from the beauties of the landscape, besides, he is not quite so well as usual, his appetite to-day is not good, and he passed a restless night, still his animal spirits are most excellent. On—on—day after day through Viterbo and Acquapendente, the Papal States are passed, and on the seventh day Baccano is near at hand, from whence the first view is had of the unsurpassed domes and ruins of the Eternal City. With nothing to vary the monotony of life, the marquis became a prey to the most extreme dejection of spirits. His health was not good, there was a feverish restlessness about him that completely deranged his appetite, and the functions of the liver and tributary organs seemed to be performed in a very imperfect manner. Still he exerted himself to wile away the tedious hours of his daily imprisonment until the sense of uneasiness or fatigue might remind him of his couch. Unfortunately, no such sense came to his relief, the privation of all bodily exercise acting primarily by producing

derangement in the organs of digestion and assimilation, and sympathetically also on the whole nervous system, the sensation of repletion and fulness takes the place of those of natural weariness, ever consequent upon exercise, and sleep is thenceforth banished from the pillow, though it be of down. As his previous habits, too, had ever been such as gave him much exercise, so had he never before felt the annoying restlessness of lying his head on a sleepless pillow, but now this was almost insupportable, and although free from any severe bodily suffering, yet was he the victim to a state of watchfulness painful beyond conception. So true is it, that to the just performance of the functions of life and its consequent enjoyment, a certain degree of labour is absolutely necessary; it is one of the balance-wheels of existence, by which the whole machinery of man's organisation is kept in healthy motion. Let the balance-wheel be impaired by rust, derangement in the works tributary to it is as certain as it is in the instrument of analogy we have chosen, the clock.

Oh! how painful is the sensation of beholding that which we ardently desire, but must not enjoy! Many a time was the marquis on the point of jumping out of the coach and paying the bet, for the blessed privilege of again pressing the earth with his feet. They were becoming benumbed for want of use. What a delight would it not have been to be permitted to change positions even with a beggar! Lonely and sad, woe-begone and dejected, he watched the goatherds walking with their flocks on the distant hills, the jocund muleteers, too, descending from their animals and walking for miles, nay, the herdsmen and tillers of the earth became to him objects of envy, and the life of a penny postman had for him charms known probably to few who follow that vocation.

It was a day of religious festival and jubilee in the seven-hilled city. He turned away from it in disgust. But now half the journey was accomplished,—courage—it was left to him only to retrace, by another route, his way home, where, once arrived, his wager was gained, and the door of his prison would be opened. The classic ground so memorable in ancient story—the towers of other times—the renowned lake (Ithrasymenè) where an earthquake was unheeded in the madness of mankind,—these were all in turn passed by with scarce a thought. Moody and melancholy, the poor marquis grew worse from day to day, his feet seemed less able to support him than formerly, a benumbing sensation had spread over all the muscles of both legs, and, although he had now but little use for them, yet even the little that he had was associated with extreme debility. He is now within three days' ride of his own palace-gate, but he sits up very little to-day, and is compelled to support himself with a stick. Placing his food as near at hand as possible, for the last two days he is obliged to keep entirely to his couch, the weakness of his limbs being so great as to prevent him from standing upright. The time goes on—the gates of the fair city of Florence are at hand—the whip cracks—the wheels rattle—the horses fly—the marquis is at the portal of his palace. Welcomed by his friends, the coach-prison door is opened, and the poor nobleman is lifted out, incapable of standing on the ground, a perfect and confirmed cripple.

And now is the marquis visited by his condoling friends, and the first medical skill that Florence can furnish is summoned to his aid. Doctors disagree. One calls it palsy, another says it is gout, a third declares it is loss of nervous power, they each, in turn, pursue their own plan of treatment, and, after months of attendance, leave the patient no better than

they found him. Other skill is sought. Padua, renowned for its university, spares its most learned professor of the healing art, he shakes his head most gravely, and declares that the first doctors had mistaken the disease. He consults the authorities, for he is a learned, a very learned man,—Hippocrates, Celsus, Galen, and Avicenna are examined, and bring their ancient wisdom to bear upon the case. The complaint is, to our professor, made most clear—it is obstruction in the venous circulation. Avicenna is copious on the case, and the marquis and his friends are filled with hope. The course of treatment is entirely changed. Rubefacients and blisters, and irritating plasters, medicines, too, to enlarge the size of the veins, and others to make thin the blood on its return to the heart. O, learned man! pursue thy plan of treatment—but what is the result? Thy views, derived from the wisdom of the ancients, are still the same. thy fee is princely—but the poor patient remains unchanged. Bologna is a school of medicine famous in the annals of the world, many of the princes, and potentates, and mighty men of all nations here seek for the physicians, and from hence are they now summoned to the sick man's bedside. Grave-looking men, in the costume of the learned look wise upon the feeble and now emaciated limbs, and pronounce the malady to be Neuralgia. Ah! why had not the others found it out? Again hope visits the lame man, and his friends gain courage and rejoice. New plans of cure are adopted, time and treatment both go on, and with the same results. The wisdom of Bologna is as nought, and their homœopathic and hydropathic wonders are announced in the world, and these, too, are tried—nay, medicines from “farthest Ind,” and the practice of the Hindoos and the doctors of Malabar, with that of medicine men of savage tribes, with the hope inspiring fallacies of shampooing, mesmerism, acupuncture, vapour-bathing, and electricity, were all in vain—and exhausted with further useless attempts at cure, the marquis yields himself to his fate, and he who of old could outstrip the fleetest runner at the race, and ever shone most active and graceful in the dance, was now a crippled man for life.

Of the party of gentlemen who became the immediate successors to the comfortably-arranged carriage of the marquis, and with whom our tale commences, one was a physician of good repute, a medical graduate of the Universities of Edinburgh and Göttinge. Fresh from the schools of Germany, where everything that is wild and mysterious in medicine as well as metaphysics generally originates, the mind of Dr. Fontellet, highly enthusiastic in all his pursuits, yet tempered with a becoming share of caution to regulate his investigations, had of late become strongly impressed in favour of a new doctrine in medicine known by the name of Isopathy. As it is without doubt destined to rank with other received and established systems, we cannot better describe it than it has already been done in one of the very late numbers of the best English medical journals from which we quote

ISOPATHY

“Another system of medicine has made its appearance in Germany, and is now becoming known under the name of Isopathy. A Doctor Hermann is the Hahnemann or Priessnitz of the new system, which derives its name from the doctrine that the disease of any organ is to be cured medicinally by the use of the analogous organ of some healthy

animal Thus, in disease of the liver, the healthy liver of some domestic animal, under certain modifications, is prescribed As it might not be convenient to prescribe the substance of the organ, Dr Hermann professes to make tinctures thereof, and thus to exhibit concentrated essences Like all new doctrines, it has made a certain number of converts, who designate themselves Isopathists It is also reported that many radical cures have already been effected by this system"

Of the truth and efficacy of the doctrines of this system over all others Dr Fontelle was most devotedly assured His experiments had been conducted in concert with Dr Carl Von Hermann, a man of acute intellect and unprejudiced research That it should meet with foes and opponents in the members of the regular faculty, is not at all to be wondered at With them, every departure from their own established opinions becomes at once professional heresy, and, in the language of the story, "their doxy is orthodoxy, while every other doxy is heterodoxy" The mighty truth of the circulation of the blood was received with denision by the regular physicians of the time, and it is no difficult task, for learned blockheads to sneer at discovery or innovation in an art so purely conjectural, that it has been described as ' putting medicines of which we know little into a body of which we know less '

But, alas! for poor human knowledge! how faithfully does it verify the saying of the wisest of mankind, that "there is nothing new under the sun" Isopathy is of very ancient date, nay, of an age long before the organisation of schools of medicine or societies of surgeons Celsus speaks of the udder of the cow taken warm from the animal as a remedy in quinsy It is an aphorism of Hippocrates that the blood of a healthy young calf is good in wasting away of the body,—(Marasmus) and of a more modern age the learned anatomist Vesalius, whose excellent work is an authority on the transfusion of the blood—which by-the-by, is itself an approach to Isopathy—cites case upon case where, to wrap a patient in the hot hide of a young calf just severed from the body wrought wonderful cures in Hysteria and nervous affections In a medical work as late as the year 1669, a recipe is extant for "Fittes and Woimes," which tells us "to rip up ye bellye of a lyve hen and clap it on ye stomacke "

Satisfied in his own opinion that the disease of the marquis (intelligence of which had reached him) was one to be met and successfully combated by the Isopathic treatment, Dr Fontelle lost no time in being introduced to him, and on explaining the happy results of some previous hopeless cases by the new system, he was at once permitted to undertake the charge of the marquis, and the doctor's friend and patron, Hermann, its founder, was summoned from the University of Gottingen, of which he was one of its most distinguished professors, to assist him in the task The treatment was at once commenced, but we will spare the reader the prolixity of its detail yet the truth must be told Isopathy, with all its powers and charms of novelty, was to the poor sufferer valueless as all that had gone before Although the enthusiasm of Dr Fontelle met with a severe check where he had hoped for triumph, still his confidence in the new system was of course in nowise diminished by a single failure, and that, too, in a chronic disease that had already defied all surgery Besides, it should have been mentioned that the Isopathists insist that, to the success of their system, it is indispensable that they shall have the first treatment of the patient They contend that their mode is a natural one,—that after the human body has been changed by a course of medicines which

they do not approve or use, natural Isopathy cannot be expected to meet cases where the body, by improper medication, is in a state opposed to nature, and from this time it has become an established axiom to undertake no case except from its commencement

At this time, for some reasons of domestic policy, the marquis proposed to pass the ensuing winter at Pisa—the air being milder, and better suited to his invalid habits than that of Florence. He forthwith removed to a family mansion, situated on the Lung d Arno, the principal street overlooking the river in that neglected but most beautiful city of palaces. Among the astonishing things connected with our humanity, none are more so than the principle of accommodation in the mind to the peculiar circumstances of the body. The young man, whose chief delight is in books, is suddenly stricken blind, another, whose happiness is in the chase, becomes a cripple, yet “that wisdom which is from above tempereth the wind to the shorn lamb,” and the blind man is merry, and the lame for life forgetteth his privation. So it at length became with the marquis,—habit had familiarised him with his condition, he despaired of cure, and he enjoyed the society of his friends, found sweet counsel in books, and was a cheerful—nay, a merry man.

It happened that upon the near approach of the celebration of the triennial festival of Santa Ranieri, the patron saint of Pisa, that unusual numbers of all classes of mankind resort to that once far famed city, to witness the pageantry and gaiety that on this occasion ever abounds. The rich and noble, with their splendid retinues—tradespeople with their various crafts—orators to plead, and improvisatrice to delight—artisans, too, in their various callings—painters, poets, players, jongleurs, and charlatans—nay, every description of human occupation pours its tide of population into Pisa, and amongst them all, and not few in number, are the *Zingaros*, or *Zincali*, descendants of the ancient Bohemian race of gipsies, whose antiquity is by many writers traced from Egypt, and whose migrations are over all the world. The particular race of which we now speak were the *Gitanos*, or gipsies of Spain—a remarkable people in many respects, and, though hunted down with fire and sword by Philip V of Spain, yet in that country at least their numbers have not decreased,—though more wandering and unsettled in their habits, and equally dissolute in their morals, as those that a few years past used to perambulate the villages of England—the women telling fortunes, while the men and boys followed the calling of tinkers and braziers, and were, in truth, petty-larceny knaves, robbing gardens of fruit, the hedges of linen left to dry, and ever levying heavy contributions on the duck-ponds and hen roosts—yet were the race of which we now speak capable of the exercise of higher arts and more useful callings, and none among them were held in so great repute as their skill in the healing art,—especially, too, in obstinate and lingering complaints that had defied the regular faculty. So celebrated have some of these become, that in dangerous cases their aid has been summoned to the healing of princes. Ferdinand III, Emperor of Germany, is said to have been cured of an internal complaint by the skilful administration of one *Gitano Gosorio*, a reputed sorceress of the gipsy tribe, whose knowledge of herbs and roots was said to surpass every botanist of the age. This lawless people, though occupying at present only the most insignificant position in society, were at one time a haughty and proud race, and so late as the year 1699, a deputation from them to the King of Bavaria, complaining

of certain wrongs, was entertained, and their grievances relieved. At this time their form of government was an established one, and, if not recognised, it was in many respects less barbarous than many with which it was cotemporary.

Despairing of ever again being restored to the blessed privilege of the use of his limbs, the marquis had for some time abandoned all attempts at a cure, and it was only on hearing certain medical wonders reported to have been performed by a gitana of the name of Chincerana, then at Florence (one of which was a remarkable cure wrought on his maternal aunt), that the curiosity of the marquis was awakened, and visions of hope floated again around the lame man's couch. It has somewhere been said, that consulting a quack is like having a ticket in the lottery—it may draw a prize. It was precisely this vague kind of feeling that, after much deliberation, determined the marquis to consult the gitana, although it was clearly proven that she was no quack, but had attended the lectures on medicine delivered at the University of Munich, and had been somewhat regularly educated to the profession she practised. Accompanied by her mother, an old matron of the tribe, Chincerana waited upon the invalid. Scarcely past twenty years of age, the commanding beauty of this superior woman attracted universal attention and respect. Dignified in her manners, and of a style of beauty truly Italian, there was that expression of elevated intellect beaming in the countenance that could rebuke all frivolity with a single glance, and it once inspired confidence in the beholder. There are certain faces that, when we meet for the first time, produce a sentiment of respect never to be forgotten, and of such was the face of the gitana. At great length, and with much judgment, she, with her mother, examined the case of the marquis. They spoke but few words together, and these were in the language of their tribe. After a few minutes of apparent deep reflection, she spoke.

"Son of the noble, thy limbs may be restored. On one condition I promise thee a cure,—the gitana hath spoken, and she never falsifies."

"I believe thee from the bottom of my heart," the marquis replied. "Truth is in thy manner, and my hopes are roused—but name the condition."

"An operation."

"An operation!" and the marquis shuddered. "Of what nature, pray?"

"Trifling. Put thy trust in the gitana, who never deceives. Fearest thou the sight of a little blood? Remember what is at stake. Dost thou consent?"

"But tell me more. The operation—who will perform it? and—"

Myself,—alone and unassisted. Ask me no more, my time is precious."

"Well, I consent. When?"

"On the eighth day from the present, at noon, the gitana will redeem her promise. Son of the noble, thou shalt be healed. In the interim, obey me in all things."

"Faithfully do I promise."

And with an air of humble yet dignified decision, accompanied by her mother, Chincerana left the apartment.

That the feelings of the marquis after this interview were of a peculiar nature, no one can doubt. What!—is it possible that an humble

gipsy-girl can affect a cure that the most learned professors of the healing art have essayed in vain' was the query constantly uppermost in his mind. By the confidence of the gitana his own courage was stimulated, yet was he determined to know the nature of the operation before he yielded to it, and he was equally resolved that some of his friends should be present at the time. Many members of the faculty of medicine at Florence, most of whom had heard of the gipsy promise, formally waited upon the marquis, urging him not to consent to the proposed operation, assured, as they professed to be, that it was a piece of charlatanerie unworthy of his regard, but the word of the marquis was pledged, and he would abide the issue. During the week the gitana sent a few vegetables, to be used as fomentations, some internal medicines also, and very particular directions as to diet, all written in very choice Italian, and in a character singularly beautiful and correct. The eighth day at last arrived—the day of mighty import to the hero of our tale. He was quite prepared, yet was there a slight degree of excitement in his manner, not at all unnatural at the time. Three of his near kinsmen, too, were with him, all of whom essayed, by every art and argument, to wean him from his purpose. One, especially, declared him nothing short of an insane man to listen to the wild gipsy hag, as he called her, and, as the time approached, indulged the hope that she would not appear, and thus at once acknowledge herself incapable of performing what she had promised and to be the impostor that he believed and hoped her to be.

But, lo! the eighth day has come—the hand is upon the dial—it is now broad noon, and, at the very striking, the gitana is there. She salutes no one as she enters, but walks across the *salon* to disrobe herself.

"Most devilish handsome and commanding, upon my faith!" says the doubtful kinsman to his friend, in an under tone.

The gitana heard, and turned upon him a look of utter scorn.

"This is no time for ribaldry, vain man,—till thou art silent, the gitana stirs not."

Apologies were offered, and peace restored. The gitana opened the door, and her mother entered. The marquis, much disconcerted by his kinsman's rudeness, at length broke the silence.

"Pardon me," he said, "and be not offended that I ask of you the nature and extent of the operation which I am to undergo."

"Most willingly will I explain," she replied. "Listen. Stagnation in the principle of life—the blood in thy veins—is the malady under which you now languish. Vesalius, the most learned of anatomists, restored the palsied limb, the withered arm was raised, nay, the imbecile prince was restored to intellect and reason by that mighty operation—transfusion of the blood. Thy blood, oh noble! is sluggish as the standing pool; thy nerves, by sympathy, refuse their influence on the motive organs, and hence is thy complaint. The dark corrupted current of life that now so feebly flows I will replace with the blood of youth, and thy powerless limbs shall again be as they were in thy prime of boyhood. Are you prepared?"

"I am."

The gitana rang a bell, and two servants, bearing a large and apparently heavy box, entered the apartment, on removing the cover, his

slender limbs bound with cords, there lay a young and most beautiful deer

"Behold! the blood of the swift, the pure, and the healthy, shall be thine"

The gitana then bound a silken bandage round the left leg of the patient, and, with a spring lancet, made a longitudinal incision in one of the large external veins of the leg, the black, thick blood flowed slowly and heavily. The gitana watched it attentively, and exclaimed—

"No motion can exist in organs where blood is like to that"

After taking away about twelve ounces, the bandage was unloosed, the bleeding ceased, and the mother, acting as assistant, pinched the aperture in the vein firmly with her thumb and finger, so as to exclude the entrance of the slightest particle of air, her daughter motioned, and the servants brought the deer, still bound, and held it near to the feet of the marquis. The operator then, taking in her hand an instrument like a very large cupping-glass, having a hollow flexible tube passing from its bottom, about four or five inches in length, and terminating in a silver tube, this tube was placed in the incision made in the leg of the patient, and at the same instant the cupping-glass end, the air being exhausted, was placed over an incision previously made with the spring lancet in the principal artery in the deer's neck. The bright, light coloured fluid poured into the cupping glass in abundance, while its passage was facilitated by gently pressing the flexible tube, and thus the arterial blood of the young deer was poured into the already emptied vein of the marquis. From twelve to sixteen ounces was thus injected—the deer

as removed—the tube taken from the opening in the vein of the marquis—a light dressing was placed upon it, and the patient who was now slightly faint, was placed upon the bed by his valet. The gitana ordered the room to be darkened, and enjoined the most profound silence. The marquis had fallen into a deep sleep, and, from the perspiration standing in huge drops over his whole body, the gitana predicted a most favourable result.

As the operation of transfusion of the blood from a healthy living animal to a human being is one that in former days occupied a high position in the annals of medicine, a few remarks in relation to it may be here not out of place. Although allusions to it are to be found in the Latin edition of Hippocrates "De Morborum," yet it does not appear to have ever been practised among the Romans, and many centuries elapsed before we again find it mentioned by some of the earlier Italian anatomists. Erychius mentions it as having been attended with success in impaired motions of the limbs, and a Swedish anatomist, Ob. Rudbec, is profuse in its praise in nervous and in many unknown maladies pertaining to the limbs. At this period, 1550, the wandering mountebanks and charlatans were in the habit of performing it, and it about the same time we read of it as a common practice with the veterinary surgeons and jockies, who, by the sacrifice of a lamb or calf gave renewed vigour to old and broken-down horses, and thereby increased their value when offered in the market. But not to take up too much time with useless inquiries, we find no well-attested record of cases until the time of Vesalius. With him it would seem to have been by no means a rare operation, and in the numerous cases that he cites, it appears to have been generally successful, especially in chronic rheumatism, para-

lysis, sciatica, (pileps), convulsions, marasmus consumptive complaints, and idiocy. That there was some danger at times attending it, he was fully aware, and no doubt fatal results must have come within his knowledge, but of these little is said. It must be borne in mind that at this time the structure and diseases of the veins were unknown, as was also the circulation of the blood, and nothing approached the truth until Harvey's important discovery. He had been a pupil of Fabricius at Aquapendente, who, cotemporary with Vesalius, was also a strong advocate for transfusion. Subsequent experiments have explained the fatality that generally attends the introduction of the smallest particle of air into the veins, and it is without the least doubt that to this circumstance most of the fatal cases were to be referred. On this point we may observe that the gitana, in her operation, was exceedingly particular. Transfusion of the blood was formerly performed indiscriminately either upon the veins of the upper or lower extremities, and sometimes on those of the body. It is now a well-established fact, that those veins only most distant from the heart should be chosen for it, since the introduction of air is much more likely to take place in the veins near to the heart than in those at a distance. In the practice of a highly distinguished London physician, within a few months death ensued from the entrance of a particle of air into one of the small external veins of the throat, during the simple operation of passing a seton in the neck. An immense deal of learned and valueless discussion upon this subject has taken place in the schools, which it would here be out of place to recapitulate, but that it is a remedy of value in judicious hands is not to be doubted, although it seems for some time to have been neglected, but that with the revolution of fashion (to which even the laws of medicine are subject) it will be revived as something new, is more than probable, especially as the Isopathists claim it as one of the sheet anchors by which their peculiar views are sustained.

We now return to the patient. The sleep into which he seemed to have been thrown by the influence of the operation he had undergone, continued for nearly five hours, on awaking, he complained of extreme thirst, which the gitana had anticipated, and had consequently prepared a drink of a decoction of marsh-mallows, made palatable to the taste, of which he partook most freely. He was perfectly composed in mind, and spoke of his sensations as peculiar and agreeable, he described them to be an unusual fullness about the region of the heart, accompanied with a thrilling sensation over all the body, and a feeling of bright excitement of both body and mind appeared to possess him. His valet now received instructions to make repeated frictions on the legs with a vegetable substance that she gave him, and enjoined him to take no food, but to drink freely of the decoction of mallows until her return.

The marquis continued in a state of pleasurable excitement, and after the friction to his limbs had been continued for some hours by his servant, what his astonishment and delight was, to find that he could move both of his feet with almost the same freedom as his hands, we must leave our readers to imagine, for we cannot describe it. A knock announced the gitana. She brought with her two linen cloths, covered with a species of red-coloured plaster, which were directed to be applied to the legs of her patient, gave him some powders, evidently vegetable, to be taken at intervals of three hours through the night, and forbade all food for the

present She again took her leave, cautioning him not to speak, as he was about to express his sense of gratitude to her

The sleep of the marquis was again most profound, and with the dawn the gitana was at his bedside His thirst was unabated, and there was a slight flush upon either cheek Carefully examining the condition of the circulation, she felt the pulse at the temporal and external carotid arteries, at the wrist also, and the heart itself With an expression of some anxiety on her face she ordered his valet to fetch a basin, and immediately binding up his arm she opened a vein and took away about fourteen ounces of blood She forbade all food, with the exception of panada and gruel, and again departed At her next visit, in the afternoon, an expression of joy was in her face, the thirst of the marquis was gone—all his sensations were of the most agreeable kind—more—more than all, he moved his limbs The gitana gently feeling the pulse at the wrist, exclaimed—

“Rise with to-morrow’s dawn, O noble,—thou art healed by the gitana!”

And true to the gitana’s promise, the marquis did rise with the dawn, and pressing the ground with his feet, he again put them forth in all their pristine power and strength

Mighty and mysterious are thy ways, O divine Disposer of the universe! The humble gipsy girl has confounded the knowledge of the wise and the learned of the schools!

But what were the feelings of the marquis, and who shall describe them? Generous and noble in his nature, the overpowering emotions of gratitude and thankfulness were not to be expressed by words—they were too weak, too powerless for the occasion How sincerely did he pour forth the thanks of a liberal heart, how truly did he desire that some immense reward, beyond mere money, were in his power In fervent and heartfelt prayer did he return thanksgiving unto God, and invoke His blessing upon her, who, as his agent upon earth, had broken his bondage chain. How, then, in delight unknown before, did he walk, slowly and surely at first, and exclaim, “What! my limbs restored?—am I awake?—or is it all a dream?” Then bursting into laughter, he would sink down exhausted, and utter a prayer of thanksgiving for the mercy he had received

To say that the marquis was liberal, is but poorly to express the extent of his bounty to her Most anxious, too, did he become to wean her from her companions and from her unsettled and nomadic habits, and desire that, under the tuition of some of his numerous female relatives, she might become a member of their household, and learn the arts and accomplishments of civilised life, which she was so peculiarly fitted to dignify and adorn Most kindly did he take pains to introduce the beautiful and intellectual gipsy-girl to many of her own sex, who, delighted with her numerous and unusual accomplishments, were proud to make her one of their number, and, as far as lay in their power, to teach her many of the duties that pertained to the sex

To all proposals, however, she listened with a cold and inattentive ear, and the time of her sojourn at Florence being now at an end, she, with her mother, had begun to make preparation for departure The aunt of the marquis, whom we have already mentioned as having been essentially benefited by her skill, became extremely attentive, using every power

of persuasion to induce her to dwell under her roof and become her friend and companion

"We will teach you," she said, "the polished accomplishments of life, —the languages, music, and the dance

The gitana, suddenly starting, replied,

"Languages, say you? Oh, what language so pure as the Rommany talk—what music so sweet as its song?"

Then seizing a guitar, she broke into one of those wild and heart-inspiring dances, accompanied with such just cadence, and with a grace of attitude that might have shamed most dancing-masters of the day. Then breaking into the Romalis or gipsy-song, she poured forth such impassioned and soul-stirring strains as would have proved a fortune to a regular cantatrice. And addressing her companion,—"And what, I pray you, lady, is it you would teach me? Can you learn me to be more happy?—O no! Am I not content? Why wish to change me? Can you improve me in the shuttle or the distaff? or can you better learn me to weave the doublet of flax, fashion the cloak of Segovia wool, plait the hat of Asturian straw, or shape the sandal of the white lid's skin? I can strike the silvery salmon as he glides through the running stream by moonlight, I can tame the mountain *borreco*, be he ever so wild, and with my javelin, I dare confront the wild she bear in her cave, though her whelps were at the teat. And more than that, I can make the philtre for the love-sick maiden that shall ever keep her lover true, for the gipsy-wife is never faithless to her *ro* (husband), and is not to be bought for silver or gold, and more than all, I know the art that prolongeth life, and can read the destiny of men in the stars.

To this the only reply that could be made was, that she was better fitted to embellish society, and become like others of her sex.

"What!" she replied, "would you make me like that?" pointing to a female passing by, "a parrot and a painted thing?—to torture my feet in shoes of leather—pinch my body in stays of iron and whalebone, and with a cord squeeze my lungs to a diseased state,—twist my hair with pins of steel and combs of copper or horn, and circle my limbs with garters and girdles?—and, worse than all, crib me in the house of the *Busne* (European), where the mountain air cometh not? Never, most kind lady, can I become a thing for society, while the trees give me fruit, the vines grapes, the gardens pulse, the rivers fish, the fountains water, the mountains game,—no, no, while these things last, ask me not to lead a city life."

And away she bounded to join her tribe, by all of whom she was worshipped as a being of a superior order. The very next day, mounted upon her snow white mule, and placed in the centre of her tribe, with them the place of honour, the gitana, bidding adieu to Florence, was on her route to Spain.

Our narrative is at an end but Dr Fontellet and his patron, Hermann, though somewhat chagrined at their own ill-success in the treatment of the marquis's complaint, yet had it is a most signal triumph of the new doctrine of Isopathy, while on its being mentioned to the learned professors of the regular schools of Padua and Bologna, they simply shrugged up their shoulders, and, with an air of profound contempt, said that which, translated into our vernacular, would be, "Quackery! quackery!"

THE CONFEDERATES, OR, THE DAYS OF MARGARET OF PARMA

AN HISTORICAL ROMANCE

CHAPTER IX

MANY were the inquiring glances cast at William Kay, as he stepped forth from his small, antique abode, in company with a young man whose cavalier air could not be disguised by his simple unpretending attire. He was not much above the middle height, and although very powerful in frame, yet this gave no shadow of clumsiness to his form. His elastic step, free and bold carriage, bespoke at once the vigour of youth, the habits of knightly exercises, and the consciousness of high birth, and there was not one of the many idlers who gazed after him in pure curiosity, but was as firmly convinced of the stranger's station in life as if the Golden Fleece had hung round his neck. His features were far from perfect, but the open brow, full lips, and blue eyes, betrayed so much youthful vivacity and ardour as to make ample amends for their irregularity.

They passed the marble front of the gorgeous Stadthaus, and the imposing church of Notre Dame, with its tower of dizzy height and beautiful design, in silence, now and then merely interrupted by a question on the part of the stranger which proved that he visited Antwerp for the first time.

They entered at length upon the Meerbrugge, and stopped in front of a stone house of large dimensions, quaintly adorned, according to the taste of the time, with bas-reliefs in cameo style and other figures, which was evidently the object of their walk.

"This, then," said the stranger, "is the house of this zealous patriot—this injured, and therefore resentful subject."

"Not so loud, for our Lady's sake!" interrupted Kay, lowering his own voice almost to a whisper. "Please to remember he does not dwell alone, he is surrounded by his family, and it would, perhaps, be as well if you were to see them all."

"I thought his friends were about to depart for England, and that this circumstance left him free."

"He led me to understand this pretty clearly the last time we met," answered Kay, "or I should almost have dreaded to introduce him to your notice."

"Wherefore?"

"Because I cannot but be conscious that the aim of this day's visit may be the means of bringing the whole family into trouble at some future period, and though I know now such a consideration would weigh nothing in the eyes of the elder Van Meeren, yet his younger brother, he whom I warned you not to initiate into your purposes, is also a friend of mine, and is, moreover, a husband and a father."

"Ha! yes,—the pretty daughter, I remember," and the youth whistled, as he entered the house, the ritornello of a Spanish song.

When Kay demanded to speak to Paul on matters of business, he found that he was yet at the fabric, which was close at hand. There, he well

knew, privacy was impossible. He inquired if his room were free?—No, —Señor Lopez Chievosa was hard at work within it. Turning to his companion, he muttered something about going up to the ladies, for the hour was near when the brothers Van Meeren would return, and it would, perhaps, be best to await them there. His companion gaily assented, and in a few minutes they were ushered into the apartment where Mistress van Meeren and her daughter were bent on their usual occupation.

As Kay entered the room, Margaret rose with a cheerful smile to greet him, but, checked by the presence of the stranger, she stopped short, and crimsoned with embarrassment.

"You must permit an old friend," said Kay, "to present to you a young traveller, a stranger in our town, the son of an ancient patron and benefactor of mine, to whom I am doing the honours of my pictures. As you well know, I have none at home in a fit state to be shown, and, as you possess so many, I was tempted to ask your permission to exhibit them. My friend will, I am sure, for my sake, be welcome among you."

Mistress van Meeren, who disliked nothing in the shape of novelty, received the stranger with much show of cordiality. At a look of her mother Margaret disappeared, and presently re-entered the room, bearing in her hands a silver salver with wine and cakes, these she offered to the stranger, with a grace which, though untutored, was not the less winning. The youth looked at her for a moment with a bold, though not rude gaze, then partook freely of the refreshment, and the painful embarrassment that, at first, seemed to pervade Kay's usually frank manner and the shyness of Margaret, gave way before the ease and sprightliness of his address. It was, at times, almost familiar and condescending in its tone, but never sufficiently so to offend. A frank, gay nature vented its truthfulness at every turn, and his lively accounts of Brussels and its *fêtes*, and the divers places he had visited, in or out of the Low Countries, diverted, more from the manner in which they were given, than from the subjects themselves. Half an hour had not elapsed before the smiles of all were, occasionally, converted into merry peals of laughter, and a whole hour passed away like a minute, so unmarked was it in its course, when, attracted by the sound of merriment, Chievosa made his appearance at the door of the apartment.

His extraordinary personal beauty struck, perhaps, the young stranger, for he bestowed on him an examination so searching and prolonged, that Lopez felt the warm blood mount to his very temples. Far from resenting it, however, by look or manner, Margaret observed with surprise that he suffered his eyes to seek the ground, and that he stood abashed before a youth so much his junior.

Kay, also, closely marked the expression of Chievosa's countenance. He stood, whilst exposed to the gaze of the stranger, like a breathing statue, his chiselled features enabling him at will, and by the mere effect of repose, to banish all peculiar meaning from his countenance without impairing its grace, but when the stranger at length withdrew his stare, the young Spaniard raised his eyes, in his turn, towards him. He permitted them not to rest in that direction for more than a moment, but a smile curled his lip, slight, but so scornful that an apt and experienced reader of the human physiognomy could easily trace in it the bud of a new-born enmity, which, in a Spanish bosom, was but too likely to ripen.

fast Kay became restless and uncomfortable, to an extent which he could scarcely conceal

"You are doubtless waiting for Master Paul van Meeren?" said Lopez, turning to him

The remark was perfectly natural, for the artist seldom passed the house without seeing his friend, yet it caused in him an unusual degree of disquietude, and he answered with hasty trepidation—

"Oh, by no means, we came to see some pictures, my friend and myself—and——"

"I think I have seen your friend before," continued Chievosa

"Indeed! I—I much doubt it," replied Kay, with increasing confusion

"Where, pray, did you see me, fair sir?" asked the stranger, turning sharply round, and facing the Spaniard "I shall be very much obliged if you will tell me"

It was Chievosa's turn to look embarrassed. For a second he remained silent, then replied, in a somewhat hesitating manner, he could not exactly remember

"I might, perhaps, help your memory by a suggestion," said the youth, still confronting the Spaniard, who seemed willing to edge out of his vicinity

"This gentleman's name is Arkel,—perhaps that will assist you"

"When and where have you met him?" demanded Mistress van Meeren, anxious to relieve the evident embarrassment of her favourite

"Nay, upon reflection, I think I must be mistaken," replied Chievosa "I have never heard that name, nor do I believe, now I observe this gentleman's face closely, that I ever beheld him before, and I do not imagine that he can be much more certain about mine"

"Indeed I am, though," said Arkel, laughing "As for my name or face, I care not who knows either. Perhaps, however, senhor, this may not be your case"

An expression of anger flashed for an instant from the dark eyes of the Spaniard but at that moment the door of the apartment opened, and the words which mounted to his lips were interrupted by the entrance of Paul and Cornelius. Their countenances expressed surprise at the sight of Arkel, so much at home amongst his new acquaintances, but, as a friend of Kay, he was welcomed by them in the most friendly manner, and immediately invited to partake of their hospitality. Paul, hearing that Arkel had never seen Antwerp before, offered to be his guide through the city, when Kay interrupted him, saying that the object of his friend's visit was not entirely one of pleasure, but rather connected with business, in a way that, he thought, might interest the Van Meerens, and that was the principal reason of his bringing him to their house

"Surely, no fresh orders from the regent," said Cornelius "It is but a few days since Van Orlay brought us the most important we have had for many years"

"Not from the Princess of Parma," said Arkel, with a smile, "but yet, I may say you are in luck, for I have brought a commission for you from a person little inferior to herself, and whose orders may prove still more munificent"

Cornelius looked pleased—Paul, puzzled, and, with his natural straight-

forwardness, he inquired if Master Arkel did not follow the profession of Kay

"Certainly no successful rival, at any rate," answered Arkel, with a laugh

This reply was not perfectly satisfactory, but Paul's sense of propriety prevented his insisting further

"Well," he said, after a moment's pause, "as your stay is to be but brief, had we not better take the earliest opportunity of talking over the business that brings you here? No better time than the present. Pass with me to my office. Kay and Cornelius will join us, if they please."

"Oh! you'll do very well without me," said the latter, "I am fatigued already, but at dinner, which will soon be served, I hope we shall all meet."

A blush spread over the stranger's ingenuous countenance. Margaret, pitying his sudden, and until then not very manifest, bashfulness, insisted on the hospitable invitation of her parents with a look, smile and tone that she was accustomed to bestow upon, and to see received by, her friends as a favour. Great was, therefore, her surprise, and no less her mortification, when her gracious advances were met by a cold stare of astonishment, that absolutely froze the words on her lip, and carried to her feminine sensitiveness the conviction of having been guilty of some gross impropriety, but in what respect she could by no means discover. Her usually soft, hazel eyes flashed with a momentary expression of anger, which brought to light on her countenance a dormant resemblance to that of Paul, which its blandness ordinarily concealed. It was as well, perhaps, for Chievosa's chance of obtaining the prize he so much coveted, that she saw not the peculiar smile that curled his lip as he marked the stranger's movement.

Paul led the way, followed by Arkel and Kay, the former being utterly unconscious, or regardless, of the effect produced by his rudeness. The eyes of Chievosa followed them, as they disappeared through the door, with an anxious expression, which Margaret construed into an inclination to retire with them, nor did this tend to soothe her wounded vanity. As they pursued their way to the small room set apart for all consultations relating to business, Kay found means, unheard by Paul, to whisper in the stranger's ear—

"Do not, I entreat, my lord, forget that you would thrust yourself on this adventure, and that for a time, Arkel must forget the pride which the Lord of Arkel may feel. If you cannot do this, it was indeed a rash and useless enterprise to come here."

"I'll try," said the youth, "but you do not know how new and odd some things seem—how they grate on the unaccustomed ear."

"They would not, perhaps, appear so strange," answered Kay, "if, in mixing with your inferiors, you could, through the power of imagination, decorate them with other names for the nonce, you would probably find yourself less startled by approaches to familiarity, if you could but fancy them justifiable."

They now followed Paul into the small apartment, who carefully closed the door behind them.

"Are you sure Chievosa will not join us here?" said Kay, cautiously looking round, to assure himself that none besides themselves were

"I think not," said Paul. "Unreproved he certainly would not. It is true, he has been of late strangely indulged in this house, and takes liberties accordingly. But does the matter on hand require so much caution?"

"More than you are aware of," replied Kay.

"Why not lock the door?" said Arkel, impatiently, "would not that be the simplest way of shutting out intruders?"

"It is unnecessary," answered Paul, somewhat coolly. "Perhaps, after all, my brother may wish to enter. If we do not talk too loud, and remain at the further end of the room, we shall not run much risk of being overheard. Pray, what would you of me?"

It did not escape Kay's notice that his friend looked graver and sadder than usual, and that there was something, amounting to despondency, in his whole manner very foreign to his nature.

"I am almost afraid," he said, looking kindly at him, "our visit and its secret purpose may not be well timed, Paul."

"If it be of the nature I begin to suspect," answered Van Meeren, "none could be better chosen. I am out of spirits, and want something to rouse me."

"What can be more calculated to produce that effect than the consideration of the miseries of this unhappy country?" said Arkel.

"True," answered Paul, sadly, "but of what avail is the patriot's sorrow? He stands alone and unsupported, in the midst of the cautious and the fearful—what avails one individual aim—one individual opinion?"

"Much in a determined, influential man, such as you have been described to me sir," said the youth, warmly, "and such as I can easily conceive you to be."

"He is all that you could desire in a confidant to your wild schemes," said Kay, "and you, Paul, can implicitly trust this gentleman, the errand on which he is bent will, I am sure, meet your most fervent wishes half way, and you will be far more willing to enter into his views and further his object than I am."

"Perhaps," said Paul—"it must depend, however, on the nature of both. Although I am afraid," he added, with a slight smile, "that I am more easily led away in such matters than you, my good friend."

"Because you cannot, like me, fly from painful realities to an ideal world of your own creation, and although the relief be but an anodyne at best, it is more powerful than you, perhaps, imagine. But with regard to this gentleman's object——"

"By your leave," interrupted Arkel, "I will myself disclose it" and turning to Paul, he continued, "I came to Antwerp solely for the purpose of ascertaining how the feelings of the good citizens stand towards those who have infringed its liberties and destroyed its peace, and who, if allowed to persevere in their present course, will ultimately reduce its splendour to a legend, for future ages to wonder at, and perhaps altogether disbelieve, and I came to this house with the hope of inducing its master to entrust me with the secret of his own sentiments on this subject."

"I make no mystery of them," said Paul, "on the contrary, I am proud to declare how strong has ever been within me the hatred of all injustice, tyranny, and oppression—how willingly I would sacrifice all I possess—nay, life itself, to free my country from the Spanish yoke! I should long since have acted up to my principles, had not family considerations been a

check upon me, but the time has at length arrived when even those must yield. You see, sir, I am frank with you."

"Certainly," said the stranger, "and you shall find me as unreserved as the sentiments you have just expressed deserve. I am here, for the present, under false colours, because, not acting with my father's consent or even knowledge, it would little beseem me to commit him by any deeds of mine, which he may not, and perhaps never will, be induced to countenance. Therefore do I wish to conceal my name and rank, though willing to peril all else in the cause."

"But although this avowal," said Paul, "makes the rank of my noble guest, and the necessity for its concealment, evident to me, and though the similarity of our feelings on a most important object is manifest, still the aim of—"

"It is this," said the youth, "there are others besides ourselves who feel, and are ready to act, like men. Thank God our country throngs with such. They are to be found in all places. The stronghold of the noble, the humble roof of the cottager, alike shelter true Flemings, not unmindful of the wrongs inflicted upon them by the proud Spaniards, and who will not sit quietly by and see oppressors wring their honours from those who boast them, and their wealth from those who have toiled to earn it, oppressors who, if unmolested in their career, will leave to future generations nought of what their fathers once possessed, but the fetters that galled them. All begin to feel that resistance is unavoidable, unless the Netherlands be content to fall, like the New World, a helpless sacrifice to the insatiate cupidity of the Spaniards. This state of things cannot endure, nor be permitted to endure. Many who have felt the yoke to be no longer bearable, have at last owned their feelings to each other, and their determination to throw it off."

"In short," said Paul, with a smile, "they have formed a conspiracy."

The colour mounted to the very temples of the young stranger.

"Nay," said he, warmly, "one cannot justly cast that name—"

"It signifies but little, my lord," answered Paul. "Why should men start at a mere word who do not tremble before the deed?" Words, in general, weigh but little with me. Pity proceed.

"Well, then, many have united to canvass the means by which this unhappy land may be freed from the grievances which oppress it. The best, the most efficient, will ever be union amongst the aggrieved. A strong body, must be formed willing to avow publicly, and to support, even with the sword if necessary, the just representations which both wisdom and necessity compel us to make. Such a body may be said, in a great measure, to exist. High and noble names, riches and honesty, able heads, eloquent speakers, bold and powerful spirits are to be found amongst its members, but this is not sufficient. This body must augment in a tenfold degree if we may hope to defend the liberties of our cities. But how shall we effect this, when we do not even know if their inhabitants can feel, or would resent their wrongs?"

"Can that be doubted?" said Paul, vehemently. "Can the burghers remain peaceful, when their peace is destroyed? When the prosperity of the towns is threatened with an overwhelming and final blow, can the townsmen be blind? No, my lord, they cannot. Many amongst us are Protestants, sincerely attached to a creed that seems most fitted to our form of legislature, and to our dispositions. Perfect freedom, religious

tolerance, is as necessary to our prosperity as to our happiness. If the tenets of distant and foreign traders be questioned and punished, as they have been of late years, they will all follow those who have already fled the land, whose privileges first attracted them. Other towns, more fortunate—other princes, more wise, will profit by our fall. This is a subject of general alarm. The question of the Inquisition is execrated by the whole city. The most staunch Catholics are indignant to see those who, though they deem them on the path of error, are still brothers in faith, inasmuch as they are Christians, treated like Panim dogs and infidels. The citizens cannot behold their friends and the most respectable townsmen delivered over to the flames and the rack, their riches confiscated and their families ruined, with the same coolness as the Spaniards view the destruction of the unfortunate Suacens, against whom national hatred and rivalry have steelled their hearts. The late public executions have produced most serious riots."

"These will be satisfactory tidings to those who have sent me," said Arkel. "My mission, however, was not solely to gather something of the general feeling prevailing through the town, but also to see certain individuals marked down for me on this list, and to sift their private opinions, to see, in short, whom we can trust, upon whom reckon in time of need, and whom boldly claim as wholly ours. I have not yet called upon one of the many patrician families I was to seek out, nor taken any steps whatever, for I will confess that Kay, whom from ancient friendship I first visited, made me such serious representations on the line of conduct I was pursuing with regard to my family, that he has somewhat damped my ardour, and stopped me at the very outset. He assured me that no disguise can avail to conceal my person nor my real rank if I am much seen here, more especially from the patricians. Perhaps he is right. At any rate, my ties as a son are as sacred as those that bind me to my country. I cannot proceed so boldly as, in my first burst of enthusiasm, I had imagined. But I came here thinking that you, unfettered as you are, would perhaps take some part of my task upon yourself. Your greater experience and your weight in this town must, if you are willing to perform it, enable you to act far more successfully than I could."

Paul bowed gravely, and seemed deeply interested. "I think," said he, on perceiving that Arkel was waiting for an answer, "I think I understand you. One consideration set aside, which a few hours will and must decide. I will gladly undertake to perform everything that can possibly rest with me. But surely, Kay, it was not patriotic thus to damp an ardent mind."

"I owe a deep debt of gratitude to this noble lord's illustrious father," said Kay, "and could I have succeeded, by my weak voice, in warning off from the path of danger one of his noble scions, I should have felt proud in having fulfilled a duty. No public or general motive can, or ever will, counterbalance private duties and feelings in my bosom. But surely, Paul, you can effect, without great personal risk, much that the young nobleman ought not to attempt?"

"With regard to the patricians, I can do but little," answered Van Meeren. "But as to those of my own standing, I can easily gather and make sure of their opinions. I can even influence them. Money I have in plenty, and am ready to peril both life and means in the just cause I embrace, but you must instruct me how to make both useful, and also

initiate me into greater details about the association you have mentioned. Not only for my own satisfaction, but for that of others, it will be absolutely necessary.

"That is done in few words," said Arkel, "we are already several hundred strong,—most of us nobles and gentlemen of the provinces. A solemn vow binds us to oppose to the last the establishing of the Inquisition, and to perish rather than yield."

"But are there not engaged herein more sons than fathers?" said Paul, with a meaning smile.

"The fathers, perhaps, will be forced before long into the course their sons have embraced. The boldness of youth will tear the veil from the cautiousness of age," said Arkel. "Hark, in your ear—Brederode is one of us, and many higher and nobler yet are in the background, believe me, watchful, as cats after their prey, to seize the opportunity which we will ere long afford them. I will not name those whom I merely suspect, but, assuredly, time will show that my words are true, though they may appear to you so lightly spoken."

"Brederode,—hark!" replied Paul, thoughtfully, "are there no other names, sir, with which you dare entrust me?"

"If you take the oath, I will give you the list. I repeat, I merely stand under a feigned name, and many others likewise, but I will give you the key. You will find many gentlemen of my father's household, and that of other princes, written down. But more must be bought over—those whose names may be worth something, though their profligate folly have reduced them to paupers,—you understand? They must be grained by that which we most lack—money. The cause is a just one, and justice must eventually triumph."

"With me, my lord," said Paul, "the feelings that actuate you are all-sufficient, but I am afraid that, to influence others, I shall want more ample details."

"Once fairly ours, they shall all be given," replied the youth, "but when shall that be? For I cannot linger here, and we are sadly in need of an able, trusty, and generous agent, all this, I am sure, we shall find in you."

"I hesitate not as to the line of conduct I shall eventually follow," replied Paul, "but I, too, have private feelings—private considerations. To secure my family from the possible, nay, probable, consequences of the bold step I am about to take, must be my first care. I can give you no decided answer until to-morrow, after the evening bell has sounded, when I can go to Kay and —"

"Nay," said Arkel, laughing, "Kay would not agree to that, the very word treason makes his blood grow cold, and his hair stand on end—and I would not involve him." These last words were spoken in a tone too decided to allow of further discussion on that point.

"Here we cannot meet," said Paul, evidently not much pleased with the manner in which the young nobleman had last spoken, "your safety as well as mine forbids it."

Arkel immediately perceived the unfavourable impression he had produced, and as Paul's individuality was one highly calculated to please his youthful and enthusiastic mind, it was his first care to check the natural hauteur which his frankness rendered it difficult to conceal, and which was, at least, never put on to wound.

"Then," said he, with suavity which sat the more gracefully upon him that it was not a mere matter of form, "will you please to attend me at my lodgings, and take your evening cup with me? My run is hard by, and it will not put you much out of your way. I will not ask you to join us, my good Kay, for, I repeat, I am most anxious to bring no trouble upon you. And in the mean time," added he, with a bland smile, seeing that Paul had not answered his invitation as readily as he had anticipated, "I hope you will permit me to partake of the hospitality which you and yours have so freely proffered?"

"I scarcely know how to answer you. What I have just heard has greatly altered circumstances. I shall certainly have the honour to wait on you, but I do not know if it would be prudent for you to be seen again in our family circle. I am afraid you have appeared there once too often."

"Nay," said Kay, "I thought it would excite less suspicion, and therefore answer better our purpose of concealment, to bring my lord openly into your house, and I would still advise you to adhere to this plan, more especially as it has been already adopted."

"Perhaps," said Paul, "But I mistrust Chievosa, and there is no chance of getting him out of the way, even for an hour."

"That is certainly unfortunate," said Kay. "Can it be true that he has ever met you before?"

"I believe I have, elsewhere, seen that remarkable young Spaniard—his person is too striking to be easily forgotten—but when or where I cannot recollect, perhaps his memory has not been more tenacious."

"God grant it may be so!" exclaimed Kay.

As Arkel moved towards the door, his two companions respectfully stood back to let him take the lead, and, in so doing, they had time to exchange a hurried whisper.

"His name?" said Paul. "Quick, Kay—his name?"

The answer wrought like a spell on Paul's countenance. All coldness, all despondency, vanished in an instant.

"Then," said he, "all doubts are at an end, with a joyful heart will I take any oath that binds me to a party which boasts *that* name among its leaders."

Whether he was prompted by youthful caprice, or dread of the weariness and ennui which he might experience at his Gasthuis, or whether he was influenced by more serious motives, it were hard to tell, but Arkel took the way which led to the apartments of the family. No trace of pride was now visible in his deportment, although he by no means talked so freely as he had done when alone with Mistress van Meerens and her daughter. He seemed more willing to listen than to speak, and his eyes often wandered from Chievosa to Margaret with a look of some curiosity and interest.

The meal which followed was a silent one, for the state of private, as well as public, affairs, had banished from the domestic circle of the Van Meerens, as, indeed, from most of those in Antwerp, all that freedom in the interchange of thoughts which had once given such charm to their fireside. All this had been over for some time, and that the presence of a stranger should add to this constraint was natural enough, still it seemed, to Margaret, that she had never seen Chievosa so abstracted, Kay so restless and unlike himself, and her uncle so moody.

Gradually a sense of embarrassment stole over them all. The young stranger alone seemed perfectly at his ease, and, though somewhat more reserved, as cheerful to the full as in the morning. Margaret had decided on showing him that she, too, possessed the secret of cold looks, but an unnameable something, an inward consciousness, told her that in this case they would be totally thrown away, and, involuntarily, under the influence of his own manner, she remained natural and graceful. From a feeling of coquetry or modesty, she could not perhaps herself have defined which, she scarcely appeared conscious of the existence of Chievosa. Never had he been so completely overlooked by her, yet she did not court the stranger's attention, but remained as calm and placid under his observant eye as if told by a secret voice from within how much this behaviour was likely to enhance her merits.

When the repast was over, Kay drew the attention of all to the pictures in the house, most of which were by his own hand. He lost himself in long dissertations about his art and his own achievements, which seemed the more strange to Margaret as it was not in accordance with his ordinary manner. He then produced the volumes illumined by Margaret for Arkel's inspection, perhaps not much to her displeasure. He talked incessantly, and being at length fairly tired out, he entreated Chievosa to sing one of his Spanish songs, which he was sure, he said, would delight his friend.

Chievosa hesitated not an instant. Taking his guitar from the wall, he placed himself in a part of the room where the light fell full upon his fine countenance, and having tuned the chords, preluded for some time upon his instrument.

"How could you think of inflicting upon me this odious Spanish twanging," said Arkel, in the ear of Kay, as he took his seat beside him on the bench which ran round the room, and was furnished with velvet cushions from space to space, for the convenience of the sitters.

"Anything," replied Kay, "to withdraw attention from yourself."

But the strumming of that most indifferent of musical instruments soon ceased, and Chievosa began a Spanish ballad, the music and words of which were believed to be his own composition, and the very first notes of his deep full voice, changed the expression of listlessness which the countenance of Arkel had assumed, to one of pleased attention.

The poetry was in itself very graceful. The sweet starry nights of a southern clime—the atmosphere redolent with the perfume of flowers—the brilliantly lighted halls of the noble—the gay, voluptuous dances of the peasantry, the peculiar features of his native land, were well set forth, interwoven with a fragmentary legend, not without some portion of wild interest. The movement and character of the melody varied with the diverse objects brought thus vividly to the imagination. Now it was soft and low—then loud and gay, here retarded—there accelerated, as the pathos of the poetry required. The voice of the singer, although deep, had so sweet an intonation that it found its way to the heart. Its peculiar charm left it in none of its notes. Rich as were the lower, the higher fell soft and clear, like those of a woman, on the entranced ear. Great, indeed, must have been the merits both of the singer and the song to make it acceptable to the listeners, to whom its theme must have been, to say the least, distasteful. Yet, when Chievosa ceased, a long pause ensued, during which it seemed to the delighted audience as if some spell was dissolved.

Arkel had suffered the music to lull him into that sort of vague, indefinite state of enjoyment, from which it is almost pain to be roused. It was Margaret who awoke him at length from his reverie. A few words addressed by her to Chievosa, in a low tone, and in Spanish—a language which he well understood—attracted his attention. They expressed the pleasure the music had given her, and the desire she felt to have it continued. She spoke with the familiarity of long acquaintance and intimacy, and evidently under the impression of not being understood by the stranger.

"No," answered Chievosa, in the language in which she had addressed him, "I cannot resume it. Were I, indeed, allowed to sing to Margaret, and to Margaret alone, I would follow I say as by inspiration, until you bade me cease, but to amuse thus unknown—and, I must say, most unprepossessing stranger—is it fair to exact this?"

"Why not," replied Margaret. "Is he not our guest? and he is anything but unprepossessing. I think him quite the contrary, but I suppose you envy him."

"Which of his advantages, pray?" said Chievosa, disdainfully, "that of being blind to beauty and deaf to wit—or that of possessing a mind too dull to appreciate the purity of the pearl or the sweetness of the flower? That only seems to me worthy of notice in him as being most strange."

"Then it is you that are wilfully blind," exclaimed Margaret. "One may be possessed of sense and manner both, without speaking poetry as you Spaniards are but too apt to do. Indeed, I opes, at all times such flowers of speech are more becoming to song than friendly converse. But I will not ask again."

And turning away, she was passing before Arkel with a light step, when Paul, who had been exchanging a few words with Kay, took her by the hand, and whispered something in her ear. An exclamation—which her uncle repressed by a severe look—had almost escaped her. Arkel was puzzled to think whether what he had said referred to himself or not, but had, at that time, no means of ascertaining.

"Will you not visit the *Tapezereypandt*, the Exchange, or some of our fine churches?" said Cornelius. "Antwerp is a city well worthy of notice and admiration."

Arkel pleaded the shortness of his stay as an excuse for not investigating better the deservedly far famed city, but said it was certainly his intention to do so on his next visit, when, probably, he would have more leisure. Then, taking leave of the family, more especially of Margaret, with more courtesy of manner than he had yet shown, he and Kay departed.

A short time after they were gone, Margaret retired to her own room. She cast herself into a large arm-chair placed opposite to a small mirror which reflected her fair young face, but its expression of deep abstraction showed how little she was conscious of the object on which her gaze was fixed. Her thoughts involuntarily reverted to the young stranger. She was astonished to find how much he interested her. She was in the habit of seeing many coming and going to and from her father's hospitable roof, but hitherto they merely engaged her attention by their display of national peculiarities or their accounts of distant wonders, but left no more trace in her remembrance than do passing shadows on the surface of lumpid water, and she wondered at herself for allowing, in the

present instance, her thoughts to dwell upon one of whom she had seen so little

Never had any of her father's guests bestowed on her less notice. His person could not for an instant bear comparison with that of Chievosa, neither did his words nor his voice sound so soft, yet there was a charm about him to whose influence she had hitherto been a stranger, a superiority which she did not the less feel that she could not define it. His bearing was so manly and assured. His was the form she could imagine clad in brilliant armour, tilting in the lists, or, no less gaily attired, in a hunting-suit, riding forth under the green boughs of the forest with hound and horn, followed by a numerous train, attending, perhaps, a lady with a hawk upon her wrist. This last image cost the fanciful dreamer a deep sigh. "Such a one, thought she, "I may never be. And yet I am very rich, who can tell?"

Mistress van Meeran, yielding to a childish confidence in omens and presages, had fondly believed that her daughter was destined to great things and had early taught her the desire of rising above the condition to which she was born, one which, she represented, was far beneath her deserts. Thus had Margaret early learnt to cherish two of the greatest enemies to repose that the female bosom can foster—ambition and romance. Happy was it for her that her uncle Paul was ever near, to warn and to enlighten, or that which, thus checked in time, was a mere shade that tinctured, might have become the pervading and baneful colour of her mind. Recollecting his precepts in time, she courageously dismissed the day-dream which, had she not exerted some power over herself, her imagination would have spun out into a thousand different shapes, whilst hours made unto themselves wings, and glided by unperceived.

It had not escaped her acuteness that there was some sort of mystery attached to the young stranger. From Chievosa's hints that he had met him before, it would have appeared natural to hope that from him she could easily obtain such information as would gratify her curiosity, but experience had taught her that Lopez was not likely to say anything but what might precisely suit his own purposes. Although a long residence in Flanders had, to a certain degree, modified the stiffness and haughty reserve natural to his nation, still he was far from having adopted, altogether, the frank loquacity peculiar to the Flemings.

The reluctance which she felt about questioning Chievosa upon the subject of her musing gave it a new turn, and she began to consider her own situation and the real state of her feelings towards that person. Indeed, they had not as yet taken any decided turn. Although nothing could exceed the homage which Margaret constantly received from him, it partook more of that of a Pagan worshipper at the shrine of his favourite idol than of the frank homeliness of true affection. It bore the stamp of insincerity in its very extravagance, and inexperienced as was Margaret, all this varnish of devotedness failed to bring to her mind a satisfactory conviction of having inspired a real attachment, the surest road to the female heart, although to succeed in completely convincing a sensible girl in such matters is a more difficult task than vulgar-minded men are inclined to believe.

Be that as it may, in spite of Chievosa's flowery professions, Margaret was much disposed to doubt the honesty, not only of his love, but even of

his character. Perhaps her doubts had not, altogether, originated with herself. Her uncle had taken especial pains to instil early into her mind as much of his prejudices against Spaniards in general, and Chievosa in particular, as lay in his power. The feeling of hatred so young and so kind a heart could not harbour, but Paul had succeeded in planting there distrust,—a feeling the most inimical of all others to love. Yet there were many things which told in Chievosa's favour. He enjoyed, in a high degree, the good opinion of both her parents. He might, moreover, prove an anchor of safety, if the storm that was gathering around them were eventually to threaten her own family.

Besides these graver considerations, her personal advantages, the mystery and romance in which his private history was enveloped, were not without some charm to a youthful and lively imagination. So deep was she plunged in this labyrinth of thought, that she did not, at first, hear a low knock at the door of the apartment. It was repeated, she started from her reverie, flew to the door, and her uncle Paul stood before her, but his features bore an expression which sent all her blood from her cheeks to her heart.

"What can have happened, my dear uncle?" said Margaret, in a tremulous voice, a foreboding of evil having seized upon her. "Pray do not attempt to deny it. I see by your countenance that something has happened."

"No, Margaret," said her uncle, endeavouring, but in vain, to repress an agitation of manner very unusual with him, "nothing has yet happened, but something that will assuredly give you pain, will take place within a few hours. Margaret, we are going to part."

"You are, then, going to England?" exclaimed Margaret.

"No,—not to England, but I am going to leave, *for ever*, the roof under which I was born,—the home which beheld the joys of my boyhood, and the hopes, the sorrows, and struggles of after-years. This is, indeed, the severest pang that I have experienced since that awful hour of my existence which blighted its better portion. In like manner will the decline of my life be embittered by this last and most painful trial."

"But why leave us, dearest uncle," said Margaret, "since it causes you pain? How could you ever think of leaving us?" And the tears started to the eyes of the affectionate girl.

"Because, Margaret, I have at last awaked from a long dream. I have not that weight in my family which I had a right to expect. My advice is disregarded,—my personal sacrifices are overlooked, and considerations of personal comfort and interest are preferred to the peace of mind of one who, having lost his all, has now nought on which to rest his affections. However, all this is over now, nor will I suffer it, henceforth, to unman me thus."

Paul could not conceal, as he spoke, a weakness much at variance with his usual composure, which brought tears, if not to his eyes, at least to his voice. There was an audible sensation of suffocation at his throat, but he conquered it, and proceeded.

"Sob not so, Margaret, I cannot endure the sight of your grief, my heart may be strong against all but *that*. Be comforted, my dear child, I part not in anger, but in sorrow. If I, henceforth, remain a stranger to everything that passes here—if I meet, without a smile or a greeting, those whom I am bound to love, it will be solely out of motives of prudence, not from any bitterness of feeling towards any one, and least of all towards you, my poor child, who have never offended me."

"But, dearest uncle," said Margaret, endeavouring to restrain the violence of her emotion, which almost impeded her speech, "why should prudence require you to avoid those who have a right to seek and cherish you?"

"As to that right, Margaret," said Paul, with a bitter smile, "it is one which your father and mother are very willing to relinquish. They have acceded, not only without remonstrance, but joyfully, to the proposal of a final separation which they think will free them from the many and great dangers to which the harbouring of a heretic exposes them. I forgive the egotism that actuates them, it is one of the most natural, if not of the most honourable, feelings inherent to poor humanity. But what I cannot forgive, is the wilful blindness with which they rush upon misfortunes which they could so easily avoid. England affords them at once security to life and property, liberty of action and opinion, and a home for you, until such a time as the unhappy differences of this poor distracted country be settled, and a happier day have dawned upon it, when they might return in peace."

"My father wishes, I know, to take no decided measures, to show himself in all things conformable to government, yet to betray no friends, to avoid all share, whatever, in what is going forward, and gradually to withdraw from affairs and from the circle of unnecessary, perhaps dangerous intimacies. In short, he hopes to find safety in obscurity, and would hurry on nothing, but abide his time."

"And time will hurry him on, and hurl him to destruction with its iron hand! I foresee it all: you and your wealth will be flung at the head of that vile Spaniard."

"Nay, uncle, you wrong my father there. He will never see his child wedded to any one but a Fleming. He merely considers Chievosa as a protector in the hour of need."

"Thrice blinded, unhappy brother," exclaimed Paul, with the energy of anger. "Does he not see that his want of decision will cause his ruin? Chievosa will soon perceive, if he has not already read, your father's designs, and believe me, Margaret, he will well know how to bring on that hour of need, when he alone can save. But, my dearest child, suffer not your reason to be led astray. Trust not this Spaniard. I know nothing against him, and yet I have secret misgivings amounting to certainty. Were he a fair, honest trader, without ambition or foolish pretence, I might esteem him more. But remember, my dear girl, that mystery more generally conceals evil beneath its veil than good, be its folds never so gracefully adjusted."

"But, uncle," said Margaret, "whom shall I now have to advise, to warn, and to protect me against this union which, perhaps, after all, may soon be urged upon me? Oh! leave me not when most I need you."

"Alas! Margaret, I repeat it, for your own sake it must be so. I am going to face endless dangers, but as my cause is just, so do I embrace it with a clear conscience, and a full determination to abide by it, happen what may. It must, however, be our especial care to make our rupture as public as possible, that my deeds may never, in any manner, be connected with this family. We shall carefully give out that this quarrel has been caused by a difference of religious opinions, which, until now, your father had not discovered. All this has, already, been agreed upon between us. To-night, when all are plunged in sleep, we shall

separate our worldly treasures To-morrow I remove, openly, hence After a whole life spent in peace, harmony, and the sweet interchange of family affections, thus do brothers part! Cruel, cruel Philip! Thou hast much to answer for!"

"Are we never to reunite?—never to meet again?" said Margaret, seizing her uncle's hand "say, dear uncle, must I thus, without any fault of mine, lose my earliest, my best friend? Can you thus abandon your Margaret, the child of your adoption?"

"No," said Paul, much moved, "no, I will still watch over you from afar, unseen I will still protect you, though unheard, still endeavour to guide you And if my worst fears should be realised, in me you will ever find a father, and your mother a friend"

"But shall I never see you more?" persisted Margaret, with a look of such pleading affection, that even Paul's stern resolution faded before it

"Openly we may not—we cannot, my dear child But, perhaps, we may be able to devise some secret means by which to correspond But hark! Margaret—the evening bells are striking It is the appointed signal—I am expected elsewhere Farewell, my child, I would take leave of you undisturbed and alone, for to you I feel not ashamed to confess my regrets, my weakness My Heaven guard you, my poor, beloved Margaret, and may my boding heart deceive me, for it feels as if woe, and woe alone, were to be the lot of all"

He hastily embraced his niece, and left the apartment

G O D I V A

A Coventre Mystery

By J E CARPENTER

(AFTER TENNYSON—A LONG WAY!)

*I waited one day for the tram at the wicket
Of that won gate by the Policeman guarded,
Through which you may pass, if you've got a day-ticket
(Sans which of the privilege, you are debarred it),
And there—having nothing else better to do,
Though the Coventry spires, all three were in view,
I shaped the old Legend of that ancient City—
In the manner of Tennyson—into a dilly*

THERE lived in the year of our Lord—but no matter,
'Tis so long ago that the date is forgotten
And perhaps, after all, this account may read patter
Divested of all that is musty and rotten,
A Baron—a regular bluff, feudal Baron,
An old English gentleman, finer than Farren,
A much finer Baron, too, than they who 'arter,
The Chart'rs of those days made John sign the Charter,
In fact, such a one as we never now hit on,
Except in the works of Sir E. Bulwer Lytton
Leofric the Bold, Earl of Mercia, his name,
Who, when William "the conquering hero" here came,
Because he would not pay the Monarch his rent,
Was the first man from court e'er to Coventry sent

Now, the Earl had a wife—clever youthful, and fair
 With a bright pair of eyes, and a good head of hair,
 At least if the likeness they put in the print
 Of the famous procession, may give us a hint,
 She was handsome enough—if a man so may speak,
 For Venus herself—in the *poses plastiques*,
 And so fond was she of the people about her,
 That, as history goes, they could not do without her,
 Such a planning, determined, good, artful contriver,
 Was never seen before as the Lady Godiva
 But hard was the heart of Leofric the Bold
 The people he *rated* in fact *they were toll'd*,
 With all the *sang-froid* that the Whigs of our day
 Make the unwilling people the Income Tax pay,
 That he must have the tin, and could not do without it,
 And advised them to make no more bother about it

So the people of Coventry, deeming that no man
 Would turn a deaf ear to the voice of a woman,
 Petitioned the Countess to speak to the churl,
 And get the blind side of the toll taking Earl
 But Leofric, as deaf as, in fable the adder,
 Said, 'finances were bad, and he'd not have them badder
 In vain urged the lady the stout Earl in vain,
 He put off the question again and again,
 But she stuck to her text, and to him so completely,
 That he thought of a plan that would trick her as neatly,
 By vowing toll-free if the town must be made, he
 Would have her ride through it, as should ride, no lady
 Now I need not describe—and tis not my intention,
 The little arrangements she made, here to mention
 Because, if the short sighted Coventry people
 Would *not* see the lady from house, wall, or steeple,—
 There was nothing in what she did that day improper,
 For if none were about, where was he who could stop her?
 Perchance in *her hurry* her husband to hustle,
 That history's wrong and she *rode in a bustle*
 However, she *did* ride—that cannot be doubted,
 And the man who'd deny it deserves to be scouted
 Besides, there *was* one—but he paid for his peeping—

Who witnessed the fact,
 But was caught in the act
 Of peeping and prying
 When he should have been lying

Like the rest of the citizens, snoring and sleeping
 A tailor, good lack!—but the history's plain—
 What he did see he never could look at again,
 For a reason—the same that would hurt yours or my sight—
 He was so much surprised that he quite lost his eye-sight!

So the old Earl relented,
 Consented—repented

And henceforth that famous equestrian rider
 His Countess, had nothing she asked for denied her

And the citizens still
 Keep their cash in the till,

For these were the words the Earl put in his will —

"E, Turicte, for the love of thee,
 For make Coventre toll-free"

And this is the whole of the singular his-torie
 Of that piece of tom-foolery, and Coventre mysterie

VALDARNO, OR, THE ORDEAL OF ART-WORSHIP

A BIOGRAPHY

CHAPTER VIII

THE morning appointed for my sister's marriage was come, and she was wedded to the Count Orazio Pallavicini, for so it was to be. At the completion of the ceremony, they were met at the church-doors by a stately procession on horseback, destined to escort them to the palace, and thence, after breakfast, to San Miniato Gate, on their way to Aula Castle. The pages, in rich costume, rode two and two in front, succeeded by grooms, attired in white and purple liveries. They were all mounted on the most beautiful coursers, caparisoned with white and purple cloth, and decked out extravagantly with embossed silver. These, at a foot-pace, tramped proudly on, the noble animals now curvetting in obedience to their rider, now tossing their fine heads in self commendation, or snorting with startling energy, while the rider himself, not insensible to his personal merits, sat erect in his seat, or in a lounging attitude, according to his humour, or the attention bestowed on him by the crowd. Next followed a band of musicians, the clangor of whose trumpets was incessant, and after them, at some distance, the friends of either house, making altogether a long and, indeed, a splendid cavalcade. The latter party were variously adorned, but chiefly in fine satin surtouts, of the most brilliant colour, with slashed sleeves, hose of golden cloth, finished with trimmings of silver tissue, and hats of scarlet silk, in which was inserted a white plume, giving a gay and noble air to the wearer. Then came, smiling and gay, the bridal equipage, with its pale faces and agitated looks, by the side of it, other grooms, in blue satin doublets, slashed, and sleeves of white, hose to correspond, and plain red bonnets. Behind the bride and bridegroom drove the Lady Trivulzio and myself. The procession was lengthened by other domestics, tenants, and tradesfolk, then gradually lost in the mob. Such was the order in which we proceeded from the Church of Santo Spirito to the Aula Palace, and thence, after the lapse of two hours spent in feasting and merriment, to the city gate, within which there was a general halt while the count and his lovely bride, attended by two grooms on horseback, went rapidly on.

Intermixed with these formal proceedings there was much to amuse. One buffoon, in particular, I noticed, who kept the spectators in a roar. At one moment he was bowing to some fair maid in the street, with all the airs and graces of the court, at another, kissing his hand heartily to a damsel at the window above him, who waved a flag over the bridal carriage. He would then seize the arm of a crone, and place it within his own, with proposals of marriage and solemn grimaces, which, met by active resistance on her side, not unaccompanied by blushes and uncouth laughter, gave abundant delight to the spectators, in the midst of which the antique dame merrily bustled off, to the mock regret of the gallant.

Two men stood outside the gate, in charge of horses. Against the girth of one leaned Piombino, pensively. Mezzofonte held the other two by their bridle. I leapt on my saddle, and was imitated in silence by my companion and my attendant. We proceeded slowly through the out-

skirt, and struck into the country by a cross-road. In due time we reached the spot where the deed was done. There we mournfully paused. Now in the neighbourhood of the low hills across the desert, we halted again, and this time dismounting, gave our horses in charge to Mezzofonte, who found shelter from observation there while Piombino and I went on. We scrambled for a long time from rock to rock, exchanging not a word, the one guiding the other, our spirits oozing from us through fatigue and pain as the sharp stones cut us, but ever replenished from within by the growth of vengeance. Our cause was righteous. The innocent and weak had been struck down by the mighty, it was ours to trace the drippings of the murderer's weapon to the infernal den! And it should be done, and the assassin be dragged into the light! His horrid secret should be wrenched from his breast! Though his present lot were bliss—though in his triumph he might have taken to his foul embrace the fairest of women, and, holding fast his prize, have resolved to defy the justice of the world—there was one who would track his steps to the remotest lands, who would hold up the tragic mask before his eyes at every encounter. Henceforth should he be hunted to the death—justice a terror to him all round, and conscience the whisperer of retribution within him.

"Are you sure of your way?" I said.

"Perfectly," replied Piombino.

"You are armed?"

"I am."

"Is the cavern now far off?"

"There it is!" said Piombino, in a significant whisper, stopping suddenly, and pointing.

We had reached the base of a rocky eminence, whose proportions awakened ideas of things the most unsightly, and such as are not often startled from the sleep which petrifies the firstlings of creation. The way was across a flood, by the discord of whose waters the air around was unsilenced. The fabled monsters of old, or more dire deformities of fresh-sprung soul, might there have found birth, as in a congenial region, for every rock appeared shattered by strong and unskilled intelligences, unearthly masons, who themselves might have been reared and apprenticed in the abortive womb of hell. Fragments, whose harsh surfaces betrayed their remote correspondence with nature, paved the ground, and maddened the stream, which, as an instinct-impelled messenger on its allotted way, crept by apace like a land-serpent swift of fin, its coils glistening afar, its neck on the crags, and these it no sooner touched than, as if decapitated, its carcase fell over in foam. There cavern lay within cavern, and I entered, as if about to trace within the centre of the earth the architectural labours of Gothic time. There was the deep arched roof, the unshapely column, and its chaotic decorations. At the aperture of a second gallery stood a figure bearing a torch, whose light illumined new archways which dwindled into obscurity as the flame shed around it a red, infernal glare. In the person of the torchbearer I at once recognised Thanatos, but he soon disappeared among the shades. Now, prompted by fierce curiosity, I pursued the straggling rays which accompanied his track, and watched him through passages which seemed to increase in grandeur as we advanced. At times he raised his flaring wand, and turned to gaze back through the darkness—my steps, which gained on him, perhaps audible at

times, and not synchronising with his, nor remote enough to be their echo. Never had I dreamed of beholding a haunt like this unearthly sanctuary, and I gloried in the chance which had drawn me thither. Unseen I saw the wonders of the place, and shuddered for a moment as one about to be immured in the monastic gloom of another world, whose cloisters are paced in imperfect penitence, and in the aisles of whose deserted cathedrals souls wander without prayer.

Thanatos paused to lean down and examine the ground with his torch, the flame fell for an instant upon his countenance, when he with the light vanished. As he stooped, I saw the guilty purpose on his illuminated face, but much inquietude besides, the undisguised emotion of a scheming heart, and the look of the peaceless. Somewhat touched with commiseration at a sight so human and forlorn, I yet quickened my steps, and I reached the spot at which he had descended just as the door closed upon his head. A partition between the confines of two worlds, whose characters, however, approximated closely, its either boundary, seemed to part us. Ere long I heard his voice with prolonged echoes bellow under my feet, and the noise, like underground thunder, made me sensible of sympathy here with the doings of the bad below, of a feeling which, like the fog of evening, tends downwards, grovelling for mere excitement's sake towards the springs of unholiness, and habitations of the unloved of heaven. His voice, so bland in my presence, was now the halloo of the bandit, and found a response in the distant and hollow deep. With my ear resting on the door, I remained a long time at the place. After a lapse, two voices were audible, and reached my ear like whisperings through a tube. Soon they were louder, and began to ascend, accompanied by the scraping of feet and creaking of a ladder. I arose, and feeling about for Piombino, who shook violently, retired with him to the wall, and drew him with me into an ample fissure in the rock, not unobserved by me when the light was present. The trap-door opened sooner than I had expected, and seemed to rest on a dense vapour of light, when two figures issued with alacrity, each holding a torch. I saw both as they passed—knew both—and, for the first time, learned to whom I had been indebted for the services of Thanatos, and with whom he was in secret alliance.

Before the two robbers were out of sight, I dismissed Piombino with an injunction to return to Mezzofonte, and with him and the horses to await my return at the road side inn. Thus far, then, success had attended on our hazardous expedition. Alone, and heedless, I was led to seize the ring, and ruse the door. Below me was a cavern in which a torch burned, but all was still in its atmosphere of crime. The ladder was at my foot, and I was led to step on it. Its contact as it vibrated under my weight charmed me on irresistibly, to retire was impossible, and I gave way to the unbounded temptation. As I descended I tried to count the steps, but the giddy journey bewildered me. Seized with a sort of fierce delight, I had difficulty in concentrating my faculties sufficiently for self-preservation. I grasped the perilous steps, my hair bristled, I was almost impelled to give utterance to a yell, that my soul might flood with its sympathies an unseen world. My descent completed, I stood and looked around. The cave was circular, covered with a Persian carpet, and bestrewn with the implements of the felon's art. Pikes, fire-arms, swords, and stilettos formed a not inelegant group. Some of them were stained with blood which had gushed from human breasts to become rust,

the sole memento of a hapless doom, while the victim cast upon the bony relics of brute mortality in an adjoining cavern, whose races had perished in peace, was left among them to moulder in unchristian burial. Powder barrels served as seats, and were covered over with the skins of goats. Flasks of wine formed a merry group, and reflected a purple beam on similar vessels brimming with oil of the olive. Corn was seen also, and on its heap were piled clusters of grapes, together with figs and other fruits. Besides, there were numerous dresses, caskets, and other articles of refinement strewn carelessly across open trunks, or littered over the carpet, whereupon I judged that the robbers held their goods in common.

This chamber, dreary, yet inviting, had open communication with others, all more or less in use, if the presence of implements were to be the test. I seized the torch, and entered the first den, the remote end of it had rarely been explored but by wild beasts, which in former times had probably known every entrance to this scene of horrors. There lay the bones of reptiles, whose race, from the starting point to the furthestmost goal, was extinct, these were mingled with the elephantine tusk, the antlers of the once swift stag, the ribs and bony columns of the bear, and, cradled within all, was observable the deeply socketed emblem of mankind. The skeleton of the almost traditionary lizard, which, without quitting the water's bank, is said to have snapped with its mighty jaws the higher branches of the palm and tops of the arborescent fern, had there been deposited by rivers now dispersed, and with no longer a bed to flow over. These creatures had been destroyed for ages, life had changed its forms, the instincts had been replaced by virtues, and succeeded by humanity itself, and this, through endless vicissitudes, had triumphed over every adversity, and risen to that Christian elevation which brings the soul into conjunction with the Creator. But these graves, though buried in long silence, had at last been only disturbed by the robbers' mirth and malediction. Evil had there taken refuge from the pursuit of good, the crucifix had not been planted within that rock, the voice of praise had not reached the Creator from those caverns of death and desolation, but the reiterated curse of man had swept the roof and walls, and had at last paused unharshly on the ear of the Arch-destroyer.

Still aided by my torch I went on through this vast cemetery, which thus recorded, in tokens not hard to decipher, the self-burial of the lords who ruled an elder creation. After wandering for some time, I espied a gleam of day. The sight was agreeable, and I hastened forward to explore its source. It came from a mouth of these caverns at the opposite side of the mountain, whose interior I thus had traversed.

From this aperture I looked with rapture upon another flood, which splashed the ledge at which I stood, and the noise of whose rushing waves refreshed my gloomy thoughts, and invited me again into scenes of day. I escaped with much difficulty from the gorge to the hill side at the left, whence I gazed on a mountain at the opposite side, clothed scantily with native pine. The distant view was wild, and a deep, uncultivated valley lay beneath it, devoted by nature to the conveyance of many waters from the wilderness to fields and vineyards afar. How little do we see of our native land, when we visit not its lonely seats!

I resolved, after brief consideration, to re-enter the robbers' home,

and endeavour to clear up, by some device or other, the mystery of Moro's fate. Ere I had time to turn round, however, my attention was arrested. On the distant side of the valley I saw a gallant troop of horsemen winding its way down the mountain towards the turbid river at its base. One of the party plunged into the water and was soon, with his horse, afloat on its rapid stream. The others followed, and I saw nearly a dozen horsemen crossing, and at the same time descending with the flood. It now appeared, that they had chosen a point at which to embark their fates on the water somewhat lower down than they designed to land for, on gaining the shore, they plunged into the tributary river close at hand, which fell from their own caverns, galloped upwards through its foam, dashing spray and rocks behind them, as, like sea-centaurs, they mounted through the hissing cataract.

CHAPTER IX

BEFORE I could retrace my steps to the gorge, the cavalcade had vanished, and the torrent once more roared undisturbed. My torch had not expired, it would light me again through the catacombs. I re-entered their labyrinth, and regained the circular hall. On my way thither my attention was arrested by the neighing of a horse, and by voices from within unseen recesses, but I saw nothing, and hastened on.

My foot now instinctively touched the ladder, not with a view to ascend, my determination being to subject myself to doubtful hospitality—perhaps to the risk of death—rather than not accomplish my object. But, as if to fix my fate at a moment when I might have wavered, a hoarse voice exploded above my head, and was answered by another from the recesses where the horses had been stabled. It was a signal indicative of fresh arrivals at the upper entrance, and the response was to the effect that all was right. In an instant I was startled by a heavy body dropping at my feet, it was a fine kid. The creature breathed but once after reaching the ground of the abyss into which it was flung. During its expiring gasp a host of fowl came fluttering from above, and dropped from fright and exhaustion. I now looked up again towards the summit of the ladder, around which, and against the upper walls, I saw several pheasants, while human figures descended the steps. I paced the floor, and was shortly accosted by men in the dress of peasantry. I returned the salute with civil indifference, and pursued my walk to and fro.

"Where is the captain?" I inquired.

The party turned to me with some surprise, and asked who had brought me there, if not the captain himself. An expressive whistle brought others of the band to share in the counsel of those present, and I was shortly surrounded.

The second detachment belonged to the troop, and showed much surprise at the presence of a stranger.

"Who left you here?" asked one after another.

"Do not trouble yourself concerning me or my affairs. All I require is to shake hands with your captain," replied I, with cold politeness.

Shortly a whisper ran from man to man, and a respectful demeanour towards me became observable in all. At length one of the company approached me with a profound obeisance, and said,

"If I mistake not, it is our happiness to owe the honour of this visit to the great Prince of Valanidi, the friend and lasting ally of our brave captain Scoronconcolo—no doubt introduced by the chief himself, whose return we expect, or by his permission."

To this address I returned a smile, but still paced the chamber with reserve. The speaker, as if his respect for me was heightened at my coolness, flung a tiger's skin over an empty barrel, and offered me the seat thus prepared.

I was not slow to recognise the faces whose first introduction to me had been at the Villa Brancalcone. Observing my disinclination to converse, some began to talk of the day's sport, and to boast of its success, while those not engaged in it only carelessly eyed the game. A good hour passed slowly away before the captain made his entry. He came by the labyrinths through which I had last penetrated the cove. When he saw me, his astonishment was certainly great, but he welcomed me, and addressed me by name. An uneasy expression lingered in his eye for a time. He soon controlled it, however, and, in the presence of his company, saluted me as his noble guest. His reflections, no doubt, as well as mine, were about Thanatos, whom I had seen with him above, but, unconscious of my discovery, he soon made himself easy. I thus took his thoughts in at my eye, without letting out my own reflections.

"We must have a feast to-day, in the name of our guest," said Scoronconcolo. "Let the banquet be at once prepared."

In an instant the floor was cleared. One dragged away the kid, another drove the fowls before him, a third levelled his gun at the pheasants as they roosted above. A fire had begun to blaze in the next recesses, log after log was added, and the burning pile communicated a lurid glare to the scene. I now felt safe for the present, but from the first had scarcely entertained an idea of danger. Convinced that Scoronconcolo must question me about my introduction into his retreat, I did not prepare a reply. Such, to one fertile in resources like myself, was ever ready. In the society of these men I knew no fear. To gratify my curiosity concerning their habits and way of thinking was an excitement, and a remote sympathy with their manner of life made me feel at home in their presence. But I had little leisure to think of myself. The fierce blaze, the flaying and roasting of the kid, the plucking of game and poultry, all within my view—lastly, the elaborate toilet of the robbers, converting them, one after the other, from butcher, cook, and peasant, into seeming princes, the whole attended with much grimace and strutting, as if unconscious of being watched—diverted, nay, charmed me.

In due time the feast was set out on a floor spread over with finest damask, and covered with a profusion of glass, porcelain, gold, and silver. Tuscan lamps lighted up the repast, and torches glared at a distance. The viands were smoking hot, the wine was as bright as the eyes of the party, and the goblets deep as the heart of the quaffing robber. Scoronconcolo presented his band to me in ceremonious form, announcing each by a name of the twelve disciples, but there were only eleven, and the name of Judas was unheard. A little startled at the sacrilege, my thoughts cautiously passed to *Thanatos as the missing one and the traitor, while towards Scoronconcolo I assumed an air of apparent satisfaction. It was not unusual, I learned, for bands to unite in the same number as that of the Saviour and Twelve.

The robbers, like the chief himself, were arrayed in Asiatic costume. Like Arabs, we seated ourselves on the ground. After my ride and long wanderings among rocks and mountains, I was not ravenous merely, but insatiate, for I had refused to break the fast at the marriage feast. I tore the delicious flesh from the kid's ribs, and helped heartily to despatch the game. We poured the Lagrime, the Chianti, the Monte-Pulciano in streams which sparkled as they fell, and foamed lightly, and pledged each other's health with touching glasses. I sat at the right hand of Scoronconcolo, on his left was one whose breast was covered with decorations, and I saw that many wore orders.

"Some of our companions," I remarked to the chieftain, with an air of pleasantry, "appear to have been favourites at court in their day. What orders are these? I ask for information, being myself no courtier."

"The most common amongst us," said Scoronconcolo, "is the order of Santo Spirito, which you must allow is appropriate to our calling."

We exchanged smiles.

"I am more in earnest than you may suppose in that remark," pursued he, with some emphasis, "merit, even under ground, finds its level in the long run. His Holiness, the chief agent of Heaven, is said to be infallible, and I admit he is so, indirectly, in many of his acts. Let me explain. Himself a bad example to man in every way (but I need not enumerate to you a great man's ordinary crimes), he wears the lovely robe of the righteous, and the result is marvellous! He appoints men like himself to the highest offices of state, makes them cardinal-princes and prince-bishops—these, clothed in a robe of the same cut, in a moment become pastors. Now behold how this robe of righteousness itself, and not the man whose skin it covers, conduces to the needful miracle of justice. Some monsignor, let us suppose, sets out on a mission from the Holy City, he travels unknown (to his Maker as well as to the world), and is delivered by the chances of fortune into our hands—the unclean hands of Scoronconcolo and his companions! We know his face again, it is he whom we have heard in the churches, saying, 'Wickedness never prospers, and pride shall have a fall.' Well, he passes us on the highway, but he does not remember the scattered of his flock—the lost sheep of his burnt-up pastures. Still we salute him, and he takes it not amiss, but there he would that it should end, for we blurt not, but point to our mountains and ask him in. And now he feels as he never before felt—it is not hell that he contemplates, for his active faith recoils from that result, and faces death itself. He has no colour, his eye lacks courage, yet he smiles. At this stage his soul undergoes a change, and feels almost as if driven by the invisible soul-hunter into a blind alley. He then rallies his thoughts, under the same pale smile he grows conscious that if he could but escape he should be great again, greater than ever, perhaps for the first time thankful. But he who feels the iron grasp of power upon his arm cannot for long enjoy a dream of safety, he rather feels with his foe that the chances of escape are few! Has he a reverie of heaven do you suppose when his knife is at the throat of a fatted sheep, or his hands are raised to bless the flock from which he picked it? Yet bethinking himself, and failing in other expedients, such is the force of habit, he offers us his blessing! He says we would not injure him—a holy man—he knows we would do so gladly, nay, with jocularity, as boys would turn a toad over. A holy man!—his robe, certainly, stands little chance of being rent in the fray, whatever his

skin may suffer, he leaves that righteous garb at home,—it would have betrayed him by its loose and graceless folds. Poor devil! he is not worse than the rest of us. Then why do I go on railing at him thus? Because he has not yet offered us his money. His diplomatic instinct suggests that he may yet find rescue, gold and all! But his hope is as unpractised as his faith. He begins, however, by the promise of a heavy ransom, the promise only, for he denies that he has treasure, and he would gladly fulfil it by loading us with chains! And now, at a given signal, to recal him to his unsophisticated senses, to teach him that he is not negotiating with kings or ministers, a blow is struck, and behold a total revolution! He who denied his treasure, as Peter once did his Master, feels suddenly as if he had heard the cock crow—as if the real devil had got on the dunghill to brag! He does not wait for the triple warning, repents himself at once, and weeps gold and jewels! Thus are we made to do the work of justice, though not as accredited agents, and thus through the holy Pope descend to us these outward tokens of grace which we wear near our hearts.”

“Such, then, is the history of the order of Santo Spirito which many of you wear?” said I.

“It is,” replied Scoronconcolo.

“You have found it, among other riches, in the jewel-box of some prelate?”

“Yer.”

“But whence so many?”

“We carry on a large trade in the way of prelates.”

“A trade in prelates?”

“Yes, a transport trade.”

“Explain.”

“We take contracts for the removal of ecclesiastical dignitaries from their sees. For example, a young aspirant to mitral honours has the reversion of a bishopric promised him, and what he earnestly desires is that the incumbent may die a natural death, than which nothing is less likely to come about.

“He must abide his turn with patience.”

“His relatives in power think otherwise. Do you suppose that a Salvati would allow a nephew of his to wait? Time is too precious, and a new order of things may accrue.”

“You, then, are employed to do the foul play. Is death the penalty of blocking up another’s path?”

“No other means has been found out of gaining the end desired.”

“Then you do not object to exercise your weapons for hire?”

“We do not seek the work, but are obliged to undertake it at the instance of great people, or we should be hunted down, not permitted to enjoy our ordinary trade in peace. We prefer the highway, and never take life unless we are threatened.”

I had heard enough of this, and had learned—what I suspected—that they did their work for hire—a source of reflection for my leisure. To turn the subject into a fresh direction, I then remarked,

“You confer the orders thus gotten on the most enterprising of your body?”

“The bravest stand first on the list for distinction, and next to them the most subtle. Such honours revive a pleasant recollection of past dangers, especially on an occasion like this.”

As he spoke, he filled his glass, and drank, while he conferred looks of

approval on all, and delight at his grateful allusion to former services was depicted variously on each face. In the midst of exhilaration there was an expression of dreadful earnestness in these men's aspect—a reality of crime which could wear no mask, a foul alliance between habit and nature. Their laugh even was not innocent, nor was it joyous, but rang like a cracked bell. No vestige of their childhood remained in their hearts, no traces of human love. The robe of unrighteousness covered all that was ever good within them. Not that they put it on for an occasion, it was a vestment that they wore always, and never changed, so they did not feel its weight on their souls.

CHAPTER X

To the repast succeeded songs, interspersed with deep draughts of wine, and, at intervals, with roars of laughter. Play followed, and its shifting events of loss and gain were announced by rounds of blasphemy, that artillery of the self-exploding soul. One of the party having relieved his purse of its contents, remained in some measure happy, though sad, and, seizing a lute, sang, in plaintive air, the faithlessness of woman. Meanwhile the one who rattled the dice was surrounded by piles of gold, and found no lack of customers willing to acquire riches without toil, or to purchase excitement at the risk of their precarious gains. Others played at mora, and—such is habit—pursued the game with honesty as well as characteristic ardour. And while these pastimes proceeded, some, in truly Asiatic ease, pressed the intoxicating and fragrant weed of the New World into the richly carved bowl, and, as from a small bright furnace, breathed through amber-mounted tubes a soothing vapour, the curling form of which they watched as it rose, until, mingled with the ideal, it was gone. As the hour grew late, they talked less freely, and then only of their personal courage, and made no reply to each other, except by looks, at these allusions to their own deeds.

During the whole time I continued to converse with the chief on his impulses and creed, and thought him, while he flattered and excused himself, a better hero, as times went, than many who had grasped a kingdom. But he held only a command in the least reputable war of plunder against his kind—one which, equally rapacious with that levied on the subject by the state, had not the credit even of lawful authority to give it support. The love of life is strong. In him I saw that life exposed almost daily in the acquisition of its bread, but with such a boldness as to secure him every luxury of existence. There is no greater man than he who faces death unawed, incited, not by fame, but by confidence in his strength and prowess. But his greatness ends with this world, he dies like the lion, a spectacle to be beheld admiringly. I liked the brigand's courage, for experience had hitherto taught me nothing that resembled it. When opposed to danger myself, my heart would sicken, though my soul was cool and firm, conscious that it carried with it to the conflict those immortal qualities which never fail, the very sight of peril striking at the root of lofty emotions, which wake up as out of deep hibernation, and effectually antagonise fear. Thus lived this chief in caverns, beloved by the daring, a respectable foe to those who as often used him as they offered rewards for his head. This genuine bravo was endowed with such philosophy as best suited his condition, of a kind tending to harmonise, not dispel, the savage romance of his being. He

saw in his dreary haunts a suitable abode for one whose habits were predatory, he contemplated, in the rude country about him, a source of prosperity to happier valleys, as, in his own destructive nature, a safeguard to the liberties of happier men. "For the dagger," said he, playfully, "must sometimes take the soundings of a despot's heart and when a cowardly people are afraid to embark on the desperate enterprise, how priceless is the assistance lent them by men like us, who have no dread to restrain their hand, and no remorse to haunt their souls." We are paid like the executioner, and, actuated by no revengeful motive, take no thought, our duty is mechanical, and our conscience, therefore, if we have any, secure from harm. The assassination of Giuliano de' Medici was a step not uncalled for, and Galeazzo merited his end. And deem you that the regal instinct will not as often need the same sort of repression hereafter? Be not surprised if one day you hear that Scionconcolo has stuck a king."

I drank with these outlaws through the night with a view to gain their confidence, and found pleasure in their society. I conversed with all by turns, and from each learned something new of degraded nature. They were not a base-born herd, they grovelled not, except in sin, but were men in whose veins was the blood of the Colonna, the Doria, and other historic names. And with all their deeply-rooted vice they had one nobleness—they were prouder of themselves than of ancestors, possessed of the instinct of all energetic minds in deeming that olden dynasties are surpassed by new. And true was it that all antiquity is for ever extinguished, true as that were the races amid whose awful bones we then revelled. And mightiest is the present for the new age is the master of the old, it absorbs its elements, walks over its remains. Yes, antiquity, while it continues to possess a place with the thinker which excludes all else, is irrestorably gone, its dial-plate lost, and its spoils like the speechless inmates of sepulchres wherein history sleeps. Be they excavated and exposed to-day, they are not disinterred, the huge stone of the past is not to be thus rolled away. There are they still, nothing here resembles their inimitable charm, whether known in crumbling walls, in the wrecks of sculpture, and the fables of descent, or felt in the chorus, still pouring down upon us from remotest ether like the memory of voices not heard, or seen in the many-columned atmosphere whose aspect, like something heavenly, has yet a barrenness of its own which it gives to deserts, bidding defiance to the restorer's art. Its monument steeped in the piety of the nameless dead, of whose divine service the flight of startled birds augurs no revival! But if the light of heroic times can shine thus through the graves of art, how brilliant must have been their present! Then let us prefer the living to the dead still, and defy each other as the ancients defied themselves.

Among the heaps of gold that the gamblers contended for, I saw a number of antique coins. The heads of the Cæsars changed owners. Augustus was lost and Nero won! I staked the effigy of Cleopatra against them, and with it gained that of kings. What of this old collection I could not win I bought, and my purse was filled with the money of the emperors. In the heat of the game Scionconcolo, throwing aside his eastern dress, acquainted me that he must absent himself for a time. He commended me to the civil offices of his men, and, intimating that he should return shortly, ascended the steps of the ladder. I deemed the moment felicitous for distributing money among the band in order to

stimulate conversation about myself, while I feigned sleep. Accordingly, what gold remained by me I gave among them, and leaning back in an attitude of repose, simulated heavy slumber. I conjectured, that under the excitement of wine and gold, the discussion would turn on what so much concerned me, the recent outrage against Moro and no sooner was I heard to breathe deeply than I and my concerns became the topic of discussion. Had I been able to enter into their most secret thoughts it had been impossible for me to have learned more. All, all that had happened became revealed to me through this device. Would that I had not heard a syllable—that my suspicion had remained the mere airy inquisitor which lurks in the shadow of men's deeds. It was not long before symptoms of drowsiness grew manifest in the party and each was overtaken by sleep on the spot, amidst the scenes of his past revel. My eyes opened upon the group as theirs closed, the lamps still glared around, and for an interval prevented my vision from retiring within by a sort of magical attraction, though my frame was not insensible to the somniferous spell which had seized upon the cavern. Seated on the ground against the wall, my left arm resting on an ottoman, I involuntarily dropped my coins into my lap, and threw my right hand, from which they fell, upon the hilt of my dagger. In this calm posture I felt the approach of sleep, but my eyes remained open, as if to watch the approach of that spirit calming power. At this juncture, whispers, such as might usher in a dream, were at my ear—the busy, earnest chattering of fancy, emboldened at being the last among the faculties to watch. As its breath ran through the labyrinths of my mind's ear, it shaped itself from rolian into articulate murmurs, and flooded the recollections of the past. The words of Angus respecting the sex of Ippolito were set afloat, not in sounds, but in meaning. I listened, and I attempted in vain to move, riveted by the clasp of sleep, when suddenly the noise, which still continued, made a rush to an arched aperture in the apartment. There a female figure stood, in a white vestment, her face so exactly like Ippolito's that, the idea once entertained, it was as if, vestalised, he had come to greet me with healing smile. Her eyes fell upon me with a power of ravishment experienced only in lightest slumbers, and soothed my senses into the glow of love, and an earnest affection, such as I had not known before, was speedily ripened. I tried to speak, to invite the fair one to my side, but my voice slept, I essayed to praise my aims, but the will was dissolved. The riveting look, the smile its companion, thrill yet within me as I revert to the vision. It was Virtue, for once seen in her true features, whom to have the privilege of beholding was to love at sight. Now, the tenderness as of a long-encoraged passion at once possessed me. She raised her finger and made me a sign to follow. How unhappy was I to be unable! The more I strove to obey the holy call, the more fixed and entranced I remained. My mind whispered its sentiments of mingled bliss and sorrow, but only to itself. A deep flood of tender expression rushed eloquently through me, passion breathed a language of its own, and gave an inspired harmony to words, such as if known to their hearts, never reached the books of the prophets! If the words of my reverie, linked as they were then, could be heard aloud, they would act as a charm upon the most depraved, no ear could resist their magic, they must carry the soul away from its baser occupations into an adoring trance like that which gave them birth, and with which their wondrous meaning ceased.

When she saw that I could not enter on her path, her countenance changed. Her eyes were upraised, her lips parted, not with looks of reproach, but of agony. At first this seemed to manifest bodily pain only, the hair falling back, the distress of the features like that of a woman in labour, an expression of transcendent loveliness, that of suffering magnanimity! This semblance of physical throes soon passed into emotion and became a picture of grief—not that of the eyes only, with their blessed outpourings of relief to the pent-up soul, for all the face wept bitterly. These changes advancing, my pity was excited and as rapidly hurried into sympathy, of all things, associated with the pure and beautiful, most hard to bear. She who was man's saviour before the fall, mourned that the fallen refused to be redeemed by even her divine successor.

The scene had not ended here as if she now saw all my feebleness, she suddenly tore her bosom open to display the yet deeper purity of her nature. Her breast rose and fell with a true and loving sigh, its beauty laid bare to the inspection of a sinner's eyes! She next turned her face towards the brigands who slumbered around. Then coarse breasts lay negligently bared, and a heart seemed to beat through them, now feebly, as if resting awhile, reprieved in sleep, now with writhings, as if woke up, the venom-bag replenished during rest, and the sting armed anew for the fresh infliction of self-torment.

As my dream grew thus insupportable, it was disturbed by one of the gang whom I saw, with my eyes open, approach and lay his hand on my coins. I did not wake up fully, but the activity of my volition having returned in excess, I withdrew my dagger from its sheath and transixed the pilferer's hand. His cry aroused me and all in the cavern, and I had the opportunity of witnessing the wondrous play of limb and feature, the cool determination to kill, in those resolute and unflinching men. I held the offender fast however, and with the hand which was free drew forth a fire-arm, at least resolved not to be the first of the party to die. In this state of defence I set my cool gaze upon the assailants.

Scoronconcolo, unobserved by us in the confusion, was, most fortunately, already upon the ladder, from which he leapt between me and his troops, all fell back in surprise at the suddenness of his return but they still held their daggers poised, their eyes glaring, and their moustachios quivering upon their lips. The chief struck the foremost of them, then snatched my dagger from the aggressor's hand and presented it to me, while he delivered himself of a lecture to the culprit. I laughed heartily on hearing morality preached by such sanguinary lips, much to the wonderment of the priest bandit and his congregation. In token of forgiveness, I tendered my hand to all, and begged Scoronconcolo to lead me into the air. We were shortly together under heaven, the sun had risen, the earth exhaled a savoury moisture.

"Farewell, my old ally," I said.

"Before we part," replied Scoronconcolo, "let me hear how you found out my abode in the Volterrana?"

"Not now, it is fit that you return to your mutinous soldiers soon we shall meet again, when you shall know all."

My manner, as I spoke, was decided. He hesitated for a moment, but said no more, and we parted.

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TO CORRESPONDENTS

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THE LANCASHIRE WITCHES;

A Romance of Pendle Forest

BY W[•] HARRISON AINSWORTH, ESQ.

CHAPTER V

THE MIDNIGHT MASS

DOLEFULLY sounds the All Souls bell from the tower of the convent church. The bell is one of five, and has obtained the name because it is tolled only for those about to pass away from life. Now it rings the knell of three souls to depart on the morrow. Brightly illumined is the fane, within which no taper hath gleamed since the old worship ceased, showing that preparations are made for the last service. The organ, dumb so long, breathes a low prelude. Sad is it to hear that knell—sad to view those gloriously-dyed panes—and to think why the one rings and the other is lighted up.

Word having gone forth of the midnight mass, all the ejected brethren flock to the abbey. Some have toiled through miry and scarce passable roads. Others have come down from the hills, and forded deep streams at the hazard of life rather than go round by the far-off bridge, and arrive too late. Others, who conceive themselves in peril from the share they have taken in the late insurrection, quit their secure retreats, and expose themselves to capture. It may be a snare laid for them, but they run the risk. Others, coming from a yet greater distance, beholding the illuminated church from afar, and catching the sound of the bell tolling, at intervals, hurry on, and reach the gate breathless and well-nigh exhausted. But no questions are asked. All who present themselves in ecclesiastical habits are permitted to enter, and take part in the procession forming in the cloister, or proceed at once to the church, if they prefer it.

Dolefully sounds the bell. Barefooted brethren meet together, sorrowfully salute each other, and form in a long line in the great area of the cloisters. At their head are six monks bearing tall lighted candles. After them come the quisters, and then one carrying the Host, between the incense bearers. Next comes a youth, holding the bell. Next are placed the dignitaries of the church, the prior ranking first, and the others standing two and two, according to their degrees. Near the entrance of the refectory, which occupies the whole south side of the quadrangle, stand a band of halberdiers, whose torches cast a ruddy glare on the opposite tower and buttresses of the convent church, revealing the statues not yet plucked from their niches, the crosses on the pinnacles, and the gilt image of Saint Gregory de Northbury, still holding its place over the porch. Another band are stationed near the mouth of the vaulted passage under the chapter-house and vestry, whose grey,

irregular walls, pierced by numberless richly-ornamented windows, and surmounted by small turrets, form a beautiful boundary on the right, while a third party are planted on the left, in the open space, beneath the dormitory, the torchlight flashing ruddily upon the hoary pillars and groined arches sustaining the vast structure above them

Dolefully sounds the bell And the ghostly procession thrice tracks the four ambulatories of the cloisters, solemnly chanting a requiem for the dead

Dolefully sounds the bell And at its summons all the old retainers of the abbot press to the gate, and sue for admittance, but in vain They, therefore, mount the neighbouring hill commanding the abbey, and as the solemn sounds float faintly by, and glimpses are caught of the white-robed brethren gliding along the cloisters, and rendered phantom-like by the torchlight, the beholders half imagine it must be a company of sprites, and that the departed monks have been permitted for an hour to assume their old forms, and revisit their old haunts

Dolefully sounds the bell And two biers, covered with palls, are borne slowly towards the church, followed by a tall monk

The clock was on the stroke of twelve The procession having drawn up within the court in front of the abbot's lodging, the prisoners were brought forth, and at sight of the abbot the whole of the monks fell on their knees A touching sight was it to see those reverend men prostrate before their ancient superior,—he condemned to die, and they deprived of their monastic home,—and the officer had not the heart to interfere Deeply affected, Paslew advanced to the prior, and raising him, affectionately embraced him After this, he addressed some words of comfort to the others, who arose as he enjoined them, and at a signal from the officer, the procession set out for the church, singing the "*Placibo*" The abbot and his fellow captives brought up the rear, with a guard on either side of them All Souls' bell tolled dolefully the while

Meanwhile, an officer entered the great hall, where the Earl of Derby was feasting with his retainers, and informed him that the hour appointed for the ceremonial was close at hand The earl arose and went to the church, attended by Braddyll and Assheton He entered by the western porch, and proceeding to the choir, seated himself in the magnificently-carved stall formerly used by Paslew, and placed where it stood, a hundred years before, by John Eccles, ninth abbot

Midnight struck The great door of the church swung open, and the organ pealed forth the "*De profundis*" The aisles were filled with armed men, but a clear space was left for the procession, which presently entered in the same order as before, and moved slowly along the transept Those who came first thought it a dream, so strange was it to find themselves once again in the old accustomed church The good prior melted into tears

At length the abbot came To him the whole scene appeared like a vision The lights streaming from the altar—the incense loading the air—the deep diapasons rolling overhead—the well-known faces of the brethren—the familiar aspect of the sacred edifice—all these filled him with emotions too painful almost for endurance It was the last time he should visit this holy place—the last time he should hear those solemn sounds—the last time he should behold those familiar objects—ay, the last! Death could have no pang like this! And with heart well-nigh bursting, and limbs scarcely serving their office, he tottered on

Another trial awaited him, and one for which he was wholly unprepared. As he drew near the chancel, he looked down an opening on the right, which seemed purposely preserved by the guard. Why were those tapers burning in the side chapel? What was within it? He looked again, and beheld two uncovered biers. On one lay the body of a woman. He started. In the beautiful, but fierce, features of the dead he beheld the witch, Bess Demdike. She was gone to her account before him. The malediction he had pronounced upon her child had killed her.

Appalled, he turned to the other bier, and recognised Cuthbert Ashbead. He shuddered, but comforted himself that he was at least guiltless of his death, though he had a strange feeling that the poor forester had in some way perished for him.

But his attention was diverted towards a tall monk in the Cistercian habit, standing between the bodies, with the cowl drawn over his face. As Paslew gazed at him, the monk slowly raised his hood, and partially disclosed features that smote the abbot as if he had beheld a spectre. Could it be? Could fancy cheat him thus? He looked again. The monk was still standing there, but the cowl had dropped over his face. Striving to shake off the horror that possessed him, the abbot staggered forward, and reaching the presbytery, sank upon his knees.

The ceremonial then commenced. The solemn requiem was sung by the choir, and three yet living heard the hymn for the repose of their souls. Always deeply impressive, the service was unusually so on this sad occasion, and the melodious voices of the singers never sounded so mournfully sweet as then—the demeanour of the prior never seemed so dignified, nor his accents so touching and solemn. The sternest hearts were softened.

But the abbot found it impossible to fix his attention on the service. The lights at the altar burnt dimly in his eyes—the loud antiphon and the supplicatory prayer fell upon a listless ear. His whole life was passing in review before him. He saw himself as he was when he first professed his faith, and felt the zeal and holy aspirations that filled him then. Years flew by at a glance, and he found himself sub-deacon, the sub-deacon became deacon, and the deacon, sub-prior, and the end of his ambition seemed plain before him. But he had a rival, his fears told him a superior in zeal and learning—one who, though many years younger than he, had risen so rapidly in favour with the ecclesiastical authorities, that he threatened to outstrip him, even now, when the goal was full in view. The darkest passage of his life approached—a crime which should cast a deep shadow over the whole of his brilliant after-career. He would have shunned its contemplation, if he could. In vain. It stood out more palpably than all the rest. His rival was no longer in his path. How he was removed the abbot did not dare to think. But he was gone for ever, unless the tall monk were he!

Unable to endure this terrible retrospect, Paslew strove to bend his thoughts on other things. The choir was singing the "*Dies Iræ*," and their voices thundered forth—

Rex tremendæ majestatis
Qui salvandos salvas gratis,
Salva me fons pietatis!

Fain would the abbot have closed his ears, and hoping to stifle the remorseful pangs that seized upon his very vitals with the sharpness of serpents' teeth, he strove to dwell upon the frequent and severe acts of

penance he had performed. But he now found that his penitence had never been sincere and efficacious. This one damning sin obscured all his good actions, and he felt if he died unconfessed, and with the weight of guilt upon his soul, he should perish everlastingly. Again he fled from the torment of retrospection, and again heard the choir thundering forth—

Lacrymosa dies illa,
Qua resurget ex favilla

Judicandus homo reus
Huic ergo parce, Deus!

Pie Jesu Domine!
Dona eis requiem

"Amen!" exclaimed the abbot. And bowing his head to the ground, he earnestly repeated—

"Pie Jesu Domine!
Dona eis requiem."

Then he looked up, and resolved to ask for a confessor, and unburden his soul without delay.

The offertory and post-communion were over, the "*requiescant in pace*"—awful words addressed to living ears—were pronounced, and the mass was ended.

All prepared to depart. The prior descended from the altar to embrace and take leave of the abbot, and, at the same time, the Earl of Derby came from the stall.

"Has all been done to your satisfaction, John Paslew?" demanded the earl, as he drew near.

"All, my good lord," replied the abbot, lowly inclining his head, "and I pray you think me not importunate, if I prefer one other request. I would fain have a confessor visit me, that I may lay bare my inmost heart to him, and receive absolution."

"I have already anticipated the request," replied the earl, "and have provided a priest for you. He shall attend you, within an hour, in your own chamber. You will have ample time between this and daybreak to settle your accounts with Heaven, should they be ever so weighty."

"I trust so, my lord," replied Paslew, "but a whole life is scarcely long enough for repentance, much less a few short hours. But in regard to the confessor," he continued, filled with misgiving by the earl's manner, "I should be glad to be shriven by Father Christopher Smith, late prior of the abbey."

"It may not be," replied the earl, sternly and decidedly. "You will find all you can require in him I shall send."

The abbot sighed, seeing that remonstrance was useless.

"One further question I would address to you, my lord," he said, "and that refers to the place of my interment. Beneath our feet lie buried all my predecessors—Abbots of Whalley. Here lies John Eccles, for whom was carved the stall in which your lordship hath sat, and from which I have been dethroned. Here rests the learned John Lyndelay, fifth abbot, and beside him his immediate predecessor, Robert de Topcliffe, who, two hundred and thirty years ago, on the festival of Saint Gregory, our canonised abbot, commenced the erection of the sacred edifice above us. At that epoch were here enshrined the remains of the saintly Gregory, and here were also brought the bodies of Helias de Worksley and John de Belfield, both prelates of piety and wisdom. You may read the names where you stand, my lord. You may count the graves of all the abbots. They are sixteen in number. There is one grave yet unoccupied—one stone yet unfurnished with an effigy in brass."

"Well?" said the Earl of Derby

"When I sat in that stall, my lord," pursued Paslew, pointing to the abbot's chair when I was head of this church, it was my thought to rest here among my brother abbots"

"You have forfeited the right," replied the earl, sternly "All the abbots, whose dust is crumbling beneath us, died in the odour of sanctity, loyal to their sovereigns, and true to their country whereas you will die an attainted felon and rebel You can have no place amongst them Concern not yourself further in the matter I will find a fitting grave for you,—perchance at the foot of the gallows"

And turning abruptly away, he gave the signal for general departure

Ere the clock in the church tower had tolled once the lights were extinguished, and of the priestly train who had recently thronged the fane, all were gone, like a troop of ghosts evoked at midnight by necromantic skill, and then suddenly dismissed Deep silence again brooded in the aisles, hushed was the organ, mute the melodious choir The only light penetrating the convent church proceeded from the moon, whose rays, shining through the painted windows, fell upon the graves of the old abbots in the presbytery, and on the two biers within the adjoining chapel, whose stark burdens they quickened into fearful semblance of life

CHAPTER VI

TETER ET FORTIS CARCER

LEFT alone, and unable to pray, the abbot strove to dissipate his agitation of spirit by walking to and fro within his chamber, and while thus occupied, he was interrupted by a guard, who told him that the priest sent by the Earl of Derby was without, and immediately afterwards the confessor was ushered in It was the tall monk who had been standing between the biers, and his features were still shrouded by his cowl At sight of him, Paslew sank upon a seat, and buried his face in his hands The monk offered him no consolation but waited in silence till he should again look up At last Paslew took courage and spoke

"Who, and what are you?" he demanded

"A brother of the same order as yourself," replied the monk, in deep and thrilling accents, but without raising his hood, "and I am come to hear your confession by command of the Earl of Derby"

"Are you of this abbey?" asked Paslew, tremblingly

"I was," replied the monk, in a stern tone, "but the monastery is dissolved and all the brethren ejected"

"Your name?" cried Paslew

"I am not come here to answer questions, but to hear a confession, rejoined the monk "Bethink you of the awful situation in which you are placed, and that before many hours you must answer for the sins you have committed You have yet time for repentance, if you delay it not"

"You are right, father," replied the abbot "Be seated, I pray you, and listen to me, for I have much to tell Thirty and one years ago I was prior of this abbey Up to that period my life had been blameless, or if not wholly free from fault, I had little wherewith to reproach myself—little to fear from a merciful judge—unless it were that I indulged too strongly the desire of ruling absolutely in the house in which I was then

only second But Satan had laid a snare for me, into which I blindly fell Among the brethren was one named Borlace Alvetham, a young man of rare attainment, and singular skill in the occult sciences He had risen in favour, and at the time I speak of was elected sub-prior "

"Go on," said the monk

"It began to be whispered about within the abbey," pursued Paslew, "that on the death of Wilham Rede," then abbot, Borlace Alvetham would succeed him, and then it was that bitter feelings of animosity were awakened in my breast against the sub-prior, and after many struggles, I resolved upon his destruction "

"A wicked resolution," cried the monk, "but proceed "

"I pondered over the means of accomplishing my purpose," resumed Paslew, "and at last decided upon accusing Alvetham of sorcery and magical practices The accusation was easy, for the occult studies in which he indulged laid him open to the charge He occupied a chamber overlooking the Calder, and used to break the monastic rules by wandering forth at night upon the hills When he was absent thus one night, accompanied by others of the brethren, I visited his chamber, and examined his papers, some of which were covered with mystical figures and cabalistic characters These papers I seized, and a watch was set to make prisoner of Alvetham on his return Before dawn he appeared, and was instantly secured, and placed in close confinement On the next day he was brought before the assembled conclave in the chapter-house, and examined His defence was unavailing I charged him with the terrible crime of witchcraft, and he was found guilty

A hollow groan broke from the monk, but he offered no other interruption

"He was condemned to die a fearful and lingering death," pursued the abbot, "and it devolved upon me to see the sentence carried out "

"And no pity for the innocent moved you?" cried the monk "You had no compunction?"

"None," replied the abbot "I rather rejoiced in the successful accomplishment of my scheme The prey was fairly in my toils, and I would give him no chance of escape Not to bring scandal upon the abbey, it was decided that Alvetham's punishment should be secret

"A wise resolve," observed the monk

"Within the thickness of the dormitory walls is contrived a small, singularly-formed dungeon," continued the abbot "It consists of an arched cell, just large enough to hold the body of a captive, and permit him to stretch himself upon a straw pallet A narrow staircase mounts upwards to a grated aperture in one of the buttresses to admit air and light Other opening is there none '*Teter et fortis carcer*' is this dungeon styled, in our monastic rolls, and it is well described, for it is black and strong enough Food is admitted to the miserable inmate of the cell by means of a revolving stone, but no interchange of speech can be held with those without A large stone is removed from the wall to admit the prisoner, and once immured, the masonry is mortised, and made solid as before The wretched captive does not long survive his doom, or it may be he lives too long, for death must be a release from such protracted misery In this dark cell one of the evil-minded brethren, who essayed to stab the Abbot of Kirkstall in the chapter-house, was thrust, and ere a year was over, the provisions were untouched—and the

man being known to be dead, they were stayed His skeleton was found within the cell when it was opened to admit Borlace Alvetham "

"Poor captive!" groaned the monk

"Ay, poor captive!" echoed Paslew "Mine eyes have often striven to pierce those stone walls, and see him lying there in that narrow chamber, or forcing his way upwards to catch a glimpse of the blue sky above him When I have seen the swallows settle on the old buttress, or the thin grass growing between the stones waving there, I have thought of him "

"Go on," said the monk

"I scarce can proceed," rejoined Paslew "Little time was allowed Alvetham for preparation That very night the fearful sentence was carried out The stone was removed, and a new pallet placed in the cell At midnight the prisoner was brought to the dormitory, the brethren chanting a doleful hymn There he stood amidst them his tall form towering above the rest, and his features pale as death He protested his innocence, but he exhibited no fear, even when he saw the terrible preparations When all was ready he was led to the breach At that awful moment his eye met mine, and I shall never forget the look I might have saved him if I had spoken, but I would not speak I turned away, and he was thrust into the breach A fearful cry then rang in my ears, but it was instantly drowned by the mallets of the masons employed to fasten up the stone "

There was a pause for a few moments, broken only by the sobs of the abbot At length, the monk spoke

"And the prisoner perished in the cell?" he demanded, in a hollow voice

"I thought so till to-night," replied the abbot "But if he escaped it, 'must have been by miracle, or by aid of those powers with whom he was charged with holding commerce"

"He did escape!" thundered the monk, throwing back his hood

Look up, John Paslew Look up, false abbot, and recognise thy victim,

Borlace Alvetham!" cried the abbot "Is it, indeed, you?"

"You see, and can you doubt?" replied the other "But you shall now hear how I avoided the terrible death to which you procured my condemnation You shall now learn how I am here to repay the wrong you did me We have changed places, John Paslew, since the night when I was thrust into the cell, never as you hoped, to come forth You are now the criminal, and I the witness of the punishment "

"Forgive me! oh, forgive me! Borlace Alvetham, since you are, indeed, he!" cried the abbot, falling on his knees

"Arise, John Paslew!" cried the other, sternly "Arise, and listen to me For the dunning offences into which I have been led, I hold you responsible But for you I might have died free from sin It is fit you should know the amount of my iniquity Give ear to me, I say When first shut within that dungeon, I yielded to the promptings of despair Cursing you, I threw myself upon the pallet, resolved to taste no food, and hoping death would soon release me But love of life prevailed On the second day I took the bread and water allotted me, and ate and drank, after which I scaled the narrow staircase, and gazed through the thin-barred loophole at the bright blue sky above, sometimes catching

the shadow of a bird as it flew past Oh! how I yearned for freedom then! Oh, how I wished to break through the stone walls that held me fast! Oh, what a weight of despair crushed my heart as I crept back to my narrow bed The cell seemed like a grave, and indeed it was little better Horrible thoughts possessed me What if I should be wilfully forgotten? What if no food should be given me, and I should be left to perish by the slow pangs of hunger? At this idea I shrieked aloud, but the walls alone returned a dull echo to my cries I beat my hands against the stones, till the blood flowed from them, but no answer was returned, and at last I desisted from sheer exhaustion Day after day, and night after night, passed in this way My food regularly came But I became maddened by solitude, and with terrible imprecations invoked aid from the powers of darkness to set me free One night, while thus employed, I was startled by a mocking voice, which said,

"All this fury is needless Thou hast only to wish for me, and I come

"It was profoundly dark I could see nothing but a pair of red orbs, glowing like flaming carbuncles

"Thou wouldst be free, continued the voice 'Thou shalt be so Arise, and follow me'

'At this, I felt myself grasped by an iron arm, against which all resistance would have been unavailing, even if I had dared to offer it, and in an instant I was dragged up the narrow steps The stone wall opened before my unseen conductor, and in another moment we were upon the roof of the dormitory By the bright starbeams shooting down from above, I discerned a tall shadowy figure standing by my side

"Thou art mine," he cried, in accents graven for ever on my memory, 'but I am a generous master, and will give thee a long term of freedom Thou shalt be avenged upon thine enemy—deeply avenged'

'Grant this, and I am thine,' I replied, a spirit of infernal vengeance possessing me And I knelt before the fiend

"But thou must tarry for awhile," he answered, 'for thine enemy's time will be long in coming, but it *will* come I cannot work him immediate harm, but I will lead him to a height from which he will assuredly fall headlong Thou must depart from this place, for it is perilous to thee, and if thou stayest here, ill will befall thee I will send a rat to thy dungeon, which shall daily devour the provisions, so that the monks shall not know thou hast fled In thirty and one years shall the abbot's doom be accomplished Two years before that time thou mayst return Then come alone to Pendle Hill on a Friday night, and beat the water of the moss pool on the summit, and I will appear to thee and tell thee more Nine and twenty years, remember"

"With these words the shadowy figure melted away, and I found myself standing alone on the mossy roof of the dormitory The cold stars were shining down upon me, and I heard the howl of the watch-dogs near the gate The fair abbey slept in beauty around me, and I gnashed my teeth with rage to think that you had made me an outcast from it, and robbed me of a dignity which might have been mine I was wroth also that my vengeance should be so long delayed But I could not remain where I was, so I clambered down the buttress, and fled away

"Can this be?" cried the abbot, who had listened in rapt wonderment to the narration "Two years after your immurement in the cell, the

food having been for some time untouched, the wall was opened, and upon the pallet was found a decayed carcase in mouldering, monkish vestments "

"It was a body taken from the charnel, and placed there by the demon," replied the monk "Of my long wanderings in other lands and beneath brighter skies I need not tell you, but neither absence nor lapse of years cooled my desire of vengeance, and when the appointed time drew nigh I returned to my own country, and came hither in a lowly garb, under the name of Nicholas Demdike "

"Ha!" exclaimed the abbot

"I went to Pendle Hill, as directed," pursued the monk, "and saw the Dark Shape there as I beheld it on the dormitory roof All things were then told me, and I learnt how the late rebellion should rise, and how it should be crushed I learnt also how my vengeance should be satisfied "

Paslew groaned aloud A brief pause ensued, and deep emotion marked the accents of the wizard as he proceeded

"When I came back, all this part of Lancashire resounded with praises of the beauty of Bess Blackburn, a rustic lass who dwelt in Barrowford She was called the Flower of Pendle, and inflamed all the youths with love, and all the maidens with jealousy But she favoured none, except Cuthbert Ashbead, forester to the Abbot of Whalley Her mother would fain have given her to the forester in marriage, but Bess would not be disposed of so easily I saw her, and became at once enamoured I thought my heart was scared, but it was not so The savage beauty of Bess pleased me more than the most refined charms could have done, and her fierce character harmonised with my own How I won her matters not, but she cast off ill thoughts of Ashbead, and clung to me My wild life suited her, and she roamed the wastes with me, scolded the hulls in my company, and shrink not from the weird meetings I attended Ill repute quickly attended her, and she became branded as a witch Her aged mother closed her doors upon her, and those who would have gone miles to meet her, now avoided her Bess heeded this little She was of a nature to repay the world's contumely with like scorn, but when her child was born the case became different She wished to save it Then it was," pursued Demdike vehemently, and regarding the abbot with flashing eyes—"then it was that I was again mortally injured by you Then your ruthless decree to the clergy went forth My child was denied baptism, and became subject to the fiend "

"Alas! alas!" exclaimed Paslew

"And as if this were not injury enough," thundered Demdike, "you have called down a withering and lasting curse upon its innocent head, and through it transfixed its mother's heart If you had complied with that poor girl's request, I would have forgiven you your wrong to me, and have saved you "

There was a long, fearful silence At last Demdike advanced to the abbot, and seizing his arm, fixed his eyes upon him, as if to search into his soul

"Answer me, John Paslew!" he cried, "answer me, as you shall speedily answer your Maker Can that malediction be recalled? Dare not to trifle with me, or I will tear forth your black heart, and cast it in your face Can that curse be recalled? Speak!"

"It cannot," replied the abbot, half dead with terror

"Away, then!" thundered Demdike, casting him from him "To the gallows!—to the gallows!" And he rushed out of the room

CHAPTER VII

THE ABBEY MILL

For a while the abbot remained shattered and stupified by this terrible interview. At length he arose, and made his way, he scarce knew how, to the oratory. But it was long before the tumult of his thoughts could be at all allayed, and he had only just regained something like composure when he was disturbed by hearing a slight sound in the adjoining chamber. A mortal chill came over him, for he thought it might be Demdike returned. Presently, he distinguished a footstep stealthily approaching him, and almost hoped that the wizard would consummate his vengeance by taking his life. But he was quickly undeceived, for a hand was placed on his shoulder, and a friendly voice whispered in his ears, "Cum along w' me, lort abbut. Get up, quick—quick!"

Thus addressed, the abbot raised his eyes, and beheld a rustic figure standing beside him, divested of his clouted shoes, and armed with a long bare wood-knife.

"Dunna vo kioa me, lort abbut?" cried the person. "Ey'm a ficeut—Hul o' Nabs, o' Wiswall. Yo'n moind Wiswall, yea w' own birth-place, abbut? Dunna be feert, cy sey. Ey'n getten a steegh elipt to you windaw, an' you can be down it i' a trice—an' along t' covert way be t' niver soidc to t' mill."

But the abbot started not.

"Quick! quick!" implored Hal o' Nabs, venturing to pluck the abbot's sleeve. "Every minute's precious. Dunna be feert. Eblil Croft, t' miller, is below. Poor Cuthbert Ashbead would ha' been here i'stead o' meh if he couldn, boh that accursed wizard, Nick Demdike, turned my hont agin him, and drove t' pouke-head intended for himself into poor Cuthbert's side. They elipt meh i' a dungcon, boh Eblil monaged to get me out, an' cy then swore to do whot poor Cuthbert would ha' douc if he'd been livin'—so here cy am, lort abbut, cum to set yo free. An' new yo know aw about it, yo can ha' nah more hesitation. Cum, time presses, in cy'n fceert o' e' guard overhearing us."

"I thank you, my good friend, from the bottom of my heart," replied the abbot, rising, "but, however strong n ay be the temptation of life and liberty which you hold out to me, I cannot yield to it. I have pledged my word to the Earl of Derby to make no attempt to escape. Were the doors thrown open, and the guard removed, I should remain where I am."

"Whot!" exclaimed Hal o' Nabs, in a tone of bitter disappointment, "vo wunnaw go new w's prepared. By th' Mess, boh yo shan. Ey'st nah go back to Eblil empty-handed. If yo'n sworn to stay here, cy'n sworn to set yo free, and cy'st keep' meh oath. Willy nilly, yo shan go w' meh, lort abbut!"

"Forbear to urge me further, my good Hal," rejoined Paslew. "I fully appreciate your devotion, and I only regret that you and Abel Croft have exposed yourselves to so much peril on my account. Poor Cuthbert Ashbead! when I beheld his body on the bier, I had a sad feeling that he had died in my behalf."

"Cuthbert meant to rescue yo, lort abbut," replied Hal, "an' deed resisting Nick Demdike's attempt to arrest him. Boh, be aw t' devils!"

he added, brandishing his knife fiercely, "t' warlock shall ha' three inches o' cowl steel betwixt his ribs, t' furst time ey cum across him "

"Peace, my son," rejoined the abbot, "and forego your bloody design. Leave the wretched man to the chastisement of Heaven. And now, farewell! All your kindly efforts to induce me to fly are vain "

"Yo winnaw go?" cried Hal o' Nabs, scratchung his head

"I cannot," replied the abbot

"Cum wi' mch to t' windaw, then," pursued Hal, "and tell Ebil so. He'll think ey'n failed else "

"Willingly," replied the abbot

And with noiseless footsteps he followed the other across the chamber. The window was open, and outside it was reared a ladder

"Yo mun go down a few steps," said Hal o' Nabs, "or else he'll nah hear yo "

The abbot complied, and partly descended the ladder

"I see no one," he said

"T' neet's daik," replied Hal o' Nabs, who was close behind him. "Ebil canna be far off. Hist! ey hear him—go on "

The abbot was now obliged to comply, though he did so with reluctance. Presently he found himself upon the roof of a building, which he knew to be connected with the mill by a covered passage running along the south bank of the Cilder. Scarcely had he set foot there, than Hal o' Nabs jumped after him, and, seizing the ladder, cast it into the stream, thus rendering Paslew's return impossible

"Neaw, lort abbut," he cried, with a low, exulting laugh, "yo hanna brok n yor word, an ey'n kept moine. Yo're free agen your will "

"You have destroyed me by your mistaken zeal," cried the abbot, reproachfully

"Nawt o't sort," replied Hal, "ey'n saved yo' fro destruction. This way, lort abbut—this way "

And taking Paslew's arm he led him to a low parapet, overlooking the covered passage before described. Half an hour before it had been bright moonlight, but, as if to favour the fugitive, the heavens had become overcast, and a thick mist had arisen from the river

"Ebil! Ebil!" cried Hal o' Nabs, leaning over the parapet

"Here," replied a voice below. "Is aw reet? Is he wi' yo?"

"Yeigh," replied Hal

"Whot han yo dun wi' t' steigh?" cried Abel

"Never yo mowd," returned Hal, "boh help t' abbut down "

Paslew thought it vain to resist further, and with the help of Hal o' Nabs and the miller, and further aided by some irregularities in the wall, he was soon safely landed near the entrance of the passage. Abel fell on his knees, and pressed the abbot's hand to his lips

"Owi! Blessed Leady be praised, yo are free," he cried

"Dunna stond tawking hert, Ebil," interposed Hal o' Nabs, who by this time had reached the ground, and who was fearful of some new remonstrance on the abbot's part. "Ey m feerd o' pursuit "

"Yo needna be afeerd o' that, Hal," replied the miller. "T' guard are safe enough. One o' our chaps has just tuk em up a big black jack fu' o' stout cle, an ey warrant me they winnaw stir yet awhole. Win it please yo to cum wi' me, lort abbut?"

With this, he marched along the passage, followed by the others, and

presently arrived at a door, against which he tapped. A bolt being withdrawn, it was instantly opened to admit the party, after which it was as quickly shut and secured. In answer to a call from the miller, a light appeared at the top of a steep ladder-like flight of wooden steps, and up these Paslew, at the entreaty of Abel, mounted, and found himself in a large, low chamber, the roof of which was crossed by great beams, covered thickly with cobwebs, whitened by flour, while the floor was strewn with empty sacks and sieves.

The person who held the light proved to be the miller's daughter, Dorothy, a blooming lass of eighteen, and at the other end of the chamber, seated on a bench before a turf fire, with an infant on her knees, was the miller's wife. The latter instantly arose on beholding the abbot, and placing the child on a corn-bin, advanced towards him, and dropped on her knees, while her daughter imitated her example. The abbot extended his hands over them, and pronounced a solemn benediction.

"Bring your child, also, to me, that I may bless it," he said, when he concluded.

"It's nah my child, lort abbut," replied the miller's wife, taking up the infant and bringing it to him, "it wur brought to me this varry neet by Elbil. Ey wish it wur far enough, ey'm sure, for it's a deformed little urchon. One o' its een is lower set than t' other, an' t' reet looks up, while t' laft looks down."

And as she spoke she pointed to the infant's face, which was disfigured as she had stated, by a strange and unnatural disposition of the eyes, one of which was set much lower in the head than the other. Awakened from sleep, the child uttered a feeble cry, and stretched out its tiny arms to Dorothy.

"You ought to pity it for its deformity, poor little creature, rather than reproach it, mother," observed the young damsel.

"Marry kem cawt!" cried her mother, sharply, "yo'n gotten fine feelings wi' your larning fro' t' good scythers, Dolly. Os ey said afore, ev' wish t' brat wur far enough."

"You forget it has no mother," suggested Dorothy, kindly.

"An naw great matter, if it hasn't," returned the miller's wife. "Bess Demdike's neww great loss."

"Is this Bess Demdike's child?" cried Paslew, recoiling.

"Yeigh," exclaimed the miller's wife. And mistaking the cause of Paslew's emotion, she added, triumphantly, to her daughter, "Ey tow'd te, wench, ot' t' lort abbut would be of my way o' thinking. T' chilt has got the witch's mark plain upon her. Look, lort abbut, look!"

But Paslew heeded her not, but murmured to himself—

"Ever in my path, go where I will. It is vain to struggle with my fate. I will go back and surrender myself to the Earl of Derby."

"Nah,—nah!—yo shanna do that," replied Hal o' Nabs, who, with the miller, was close beside him. "Sit down o' that stoo' be t' fire, and tak a cup o' wine t' cheer yo, and then we'n set out to Pendle Forest, where ey'st find yo a safe hiding-place. An' t' ony reward ey'n ever ask for t' sarvice shan be, that yo'n perform a marriage sarvice fo' me and Dolly o'ie of these days." And he nudged the damsel's elbow, who turned away, covered with blushes.

The abbot moved mechanically to the fire, and sat down, while the miller's wife, surrendering the child with a shrug of the shoulders and a grimace to her daughter, went in search of some viands and a flask of wine,

which she set before Paslew. The miller then filled a drinking-horn, and presented it to his guest, who was about to raise it to his lips, when a loud knocking was heard at the door below.

The knocking continued with increased violence, and voices were heard calling upon the miller to open the door, or it would be broken down. On the first alarm Abel had flown to a small window whence he could reconnoitre those below, and he now returned with a face white with terror, to say that a party of arquebussiers, with the sheriff at their head, were without, and that some of the men were provided with torches.

"They have discovered my evasion, and are come in search of me," observed the abbot, rising, but without betraying any anxiety. "Do not concern yourselves further for me, my good friends, but open the door, and deliver me to them."

"Nah, nah, that we winnaw," cried Hal o' Nabs, "yo're neaw taken yet, feayther abbut, an' ey knoa a way to baffle 'em. If yo'n let him down into t' river, Fbil, ey'n manage to get him off."

"Weel thowt on, Nab," cried the miller, "therwst nah been mey mon seven year for nowt. Theaw knoas t' ways o' t' pleck."

"Os weel os ony rotten abowt it," replied Hal o' Nabs. "Go down to t' grindin'-room, an ey n follow i' a troice."

And as Abel snatched up the light, and hastily descended the steps with Paslew, Hal whispered in Dorothy's ears,—

"Tak care neaw onc fonds thit chilt, Dolly, if they break in. Hide it safely, in whon they're gone, tik' it to t' church, and place it near t' altar, where no ill con cum to it or thee. Mey life may hong upon it."

And as the poor girl, who, as well as her mother, was almost frightened out of her wits, promised compliance, he hurried down the steps after the others, muttering, as the clamour without was redoubled,

"Figh, roar on till yo'ic hoirse. Yo winnaw get in yet awhile, ey n promise ye."

Meantime, the abbot had been led to the chief room of the mill, where all the coin formerly consumed within the monastery had been prepared, and which the size of the chamber itself, together with the vastness of the stones used in the operation of grinding and connected with the huge water wheel outside, proved to be by no means inconsiderable. Strong shafts of timber supported the flooring above, and were crossed by other boards placed horizontally, from which various implements in use at the mill depended, giving the chamber, imperfectly lighted as it now was by the lamp borne by Abel, a strange and almost mysterious appearance. Three or four of the miller's men, armed with pikes, had followed their master, and, though much alarmed, they vowed to die rather than give up the abbot.

By this time Hal o' Nabs had joined the group, and proceeding towards a raised part of the chamber where the grinding-stones were set, he knelt down, and laying hold of a small ring, raised up a trap-door. The fresh air which blew up through the aperture, combined with the rushing sound of water, showed that the Calder flowed immediately beneath, and having made some slight preparation, Hal let himself down into the stream.

At this moment a loud crash was heard, and one of the miller's men cried out that the arquebussiers had burst open the door.

"Be hondy, then, lads, and let him down!" cried Hal o' Nabs, who

had some difficulty in maintaining his footing on the rough, stony bottom of the swift stream

Passively yielding, the abbot suffered the miller and one of the stoutest of his men to assist him through the trap-door, while a third held down the lamp, and showed Hal o' Nabs up to his middle in the darkling current, and stretching out his arms to receive the burden. The light fell upon the huge black circle of the water-wheel now stopped, and upon the dripping arches supporting the mill. In another moment the abbot plunged into the water, the trap-door was replaced, and bolted underneath by Hal, who, while guiding his companion along, and bidding him catch hold of the woodwork of the wheel, heard a heavy trampling of many feet on the boards above, showing that the pursuers had obtained admittance.

Encumbered by his heavy vestments, the abbot could with difficulty contend against the strong current and he momentarily expected to be swept away, but he had a stout and active assistant by his side, who soon placed him under shelter of the wheel. The trampling overhead continued for a few minutes, after which all was quiet, and Hal judged that, finding their search within ineffectual, the enemy would speedily come forth. Nor was he deceived. Shouts were soon heard at the door of the mill, and the glare of torches was cast on the stream. Then it was that Hal dragged his companion into a deep hole, formed by some decay in the masonry behind the wheel where the water rose nearly to their chins, and where they were completely concealed. Scarcely were they thus ensconced, than two or three armed men, holding torches aloft, were seen wading under the archway, but after looking carefully round, and even approaching close to the water-wheel, these persons could detect nothing, and withdrew, muttering curses of rage and disappointment. By-and-by the lights almost wholly disappeared, and the shouts becoming fainter and more distant, it was evident that the men had gone lower down the river. Upon this, Hal thought they might venture to quit their retreat, and accordingly, grasping the abbot's arm he proceeded to wade up the stream.

Benumbed with cold, and half dead with terror, Paslew needed all his companions support, for he could do little to help himself, added to which, they occasionally encountered some large stone or stepped into a deep hole, so that it required Hal's utmost exertion and strength to force a way on. At last they were out of the arch, and though both banks seemed unguarded, yet, for fear of surprise, Hal deemed it prudent still to keep to the river. Their course was completely sheltered from observation by the mist that enveloped them, and after proceeding in this way for some distance, Hal stopped to listen, and while debating with himself whether he should now quit the river, he fancied he beheld a black object swimming towards him. Taking it for an otter, with which voracious animal the Calder, a stream swarming with trout, abounded, and knowing the creature would not meddle with them, unless first attacked, he paid little attention to it, but he was soon made sensible of his error. His arm was suddenly seized by a large black hound, whose sharp fangs met in his flesh. Unable to repress a cry of pain, Hal strove to disengage himself from his assailant, and finding it impossible, flung himself into the water, in the hope of drowning him, but as the hound still maintained his hold, he searched for his knife to slay him. But he could not find it, and in his distress applied to Paslew.

"Ha yo onny weapon abowt yo, lort abbut," he cried, "wi' which ey con free mysel' fro' this accussed hound?"

"Alas! no, my son," replied Paslew, "and I fear no weapon will prevail against it, for I recognise in the animal the hound of the wizard Demdike."

"Ey thowt t' Dule wur in it," rejoined Hal, "bch leave me to fight it owt, an do yo gain t' bonk, an mey t' best o' your way to t' Wiswall. Ey n join ye os soon os ey con scrush this varnient's heaad. Agen a stoan Ha!" he added, joyfully, "Ey n found t' thwittle. Go—go Ey'n soon be efter ye."

Feeling he should sink if he remained where he was, and wholly unable to offer any effectual assistance to his companion, the abbot turned to the left, where a large oak overhung the stream, and he was climbing the bank, aided by the roots of the tree, when a man suddenly came from behind it, seized his hand, and dragged him up forcibly. At the same moment his captor placed a bundle to his lips and winding a few notes, he was instantly answered by shouts, and soon afterwards half-a-dozen armed men ran up, bearing torches. Not a word passed between the fugitive and his captor, but when the men came up, and the torchlight fell upon the features of the latter, the abbot's worst fears were realised. It was Demdike.

"False to your ling'—false to your oath'—false to all men!" cried the wizard. "You seek to escape in vain!"

"I merit all your reproaches," replied the abbot, "but it may be some satisfaction to you to learn that I have endured far greater suffering than if I had patiently awaited my doom."

"I am glad of it," rejoined Demdike, with a savage laugh, "but you have destroyed others beside yourself. Where is the fellow in the water? What, ho Uriel!"

But as no sound reached him, he snatched a torch from one of the arquebussiers and held it to the river's brink. But he could see neither hound nor man.

"Strange!" he cried. "He cannot have escaped. Uriel is more than a match for any man. Secure the prisoner while I examine the stream."

With this, he ran along the bank with great quickness, holding his torch far over the water, so as to reveal anything floating within it, but nothing met his view until he came within a short distance of the mill, when he beheld a black object struggling in the current, and soon found that it was his dog making feeble efforts to gain the bank.

"Ah recreant! thou hast let him go," cried Demdike, furiously.

Seeing his master the animal redoubled its efforts, crept ashore, and fell at his feet, with a last effort to lick his hands.

Demdike held down the torch, and then perceived that the hound was quite dead. There was a deep gash in its side, and another in the throat, showing how it had perished.

"Poor Uriel!" he exclaimed, "the only true friend I had. And thou art gone! The villain has killed thee, but he shall pay for it with his life."

And hurrying back, he despatched four of the men in quest of the fugitive, while, accompanied by the two others, he conveyed Paslew back to the abbey, where he was placed in a strong cell, from which there was no possibility of escape, and a guard set over him.

FIRS OF GLOOM

BY F. I. ROWSELL, FSQ

Firs of gloom—miserable moments—brief periods of wretchedness, arising out of very slight and trivial causes, occasionally, I believe, assail us all. We are conscious of there being no good reason for our sadness, yet the feeling of melancholy steals over us, and settles upon us, and we shrink beneath it. A peculiar kind of day is very influential in casting us into this dreary state. A day in winter, dark and dismal, when it rains incessantly, and there is not the least sign of brighter weather, will, ordinarily speaking, produce a frightful effect upon the spirits. We begin to think of human woes generally, and of our especial sorrows, of the shortness of life, and of the amazing amount of unhappiness crammed into existence, brief as it is. We think of an old friend who died last year of apoplexy, and mentally remark to ourselves we shouldn't wonder if we went off suddenly some day or other in the same way, we gloomily view the fact that our acquaintance Jones, who not long ago was keeping his carriage, is now in an almshouse. Who knows? that may be our fate! Certainly, there are no indications of coming disaster at present, but nevertheless that disaster may be on its road—*may be*—and we begin to argue with ourselves that the chances are it is so, and at last we settle down comfortably into the conviction that instead of being healthy, as we fancied we were yesterday, we are, in truth, just tumbling into the grave, instead of being rich, as till now we imagined, we positively are on the verge of poverty, instead of having cause to rejoice and be merry (and we recollect with remorse the happy and contented feeling which, up to this very morning, had sway within us), we have a great deal more reason to sit down and weep, with our utmost energy.

There is no doubt that if these dreary feelings be encouraged, they will increase to a dangerous extent. A man may so strive to make himself miserable, or rather may so little resist the inclination to be gloomy, that at length his melancholy may amount to putrid insanity. The matter becomes formidable then, and unless something soon take place, and vigorously rouse him, there is a fair chance of the desponding individual ere long forming a subject for a coroner's inquest.

I cannot say, however, that I have much opinion of a man who will let his spirits be seriously lowered by such a matter as a dull day, or any like circumstance. He must be a poor mortal, and I wouldn't give much for his head or heart. A man, if there be anything in him, can know a cheering sunshine in the cloudiest day—a sunshine in his own lofty thoughts—his own bright imaginations. Just as a man may be alone, and yet in company, sitting solitarily in his study, he may in his mind's eye see men who have lived hundreds of years ago, and fancy in a moment may crowd into his chamber a brilliant multitude of the distant and the dead. I say he is only a poor creature, who is bound emphatically to the present, who can only behold what is immediately before his eyes, can only hear what is uttered directly in his hearing. A man should be able, by a mental effort, to transport himself, so to speak, to quite a different scene to that which, in reality, lies before him, and be affected by sights and sounds, which are only the offspring of imagination. Fancy can create a paradise, and to give the reins freely to imagination, and soar far away from the present scene to some dear spot in which our heart dwells, or to conjure up, as by a magician's power, the forms of those

whose society would be delightful to us, and, in thought, to enter into converse with them, speak to them, and hear them reply, as though, in very truth, instead of being far distant, or, alas! perhaps, worse, irrecoverably gone from us, they were with us in close and beautiful companionship—I say, to do this, is to know one of those deep pleasures of which there are so few in this mortal existence.

By these means, then, I could always baffle the gloomy influence of such a trifling circumstance as a bad day. But this is the lightest influence to contend against, and the easiest to overcome. There is a melancholy of another order—of a calm, placid kind, having no resemblance to vulgar fretfulness or irritability, brought about by no nervousness or impatience, but induced by an involuntary pondering upon some of those higher matters connected with our existence, which, entering into the soul, cast from out it every atom of pride, and bring it into a state of intense humiliation. Under such a feeling I write at this moment. An hour ago there reached me intelligence of that event which, before this article shall have appeared, will have become known in every direction, and be regarded with a composure with which now it is impossible to survey it—I mean the death, under painful circumstances, of that distinguished individual who, for so long a period, exercised a main influence in the affairs of this nation. That event, coming thus startlingly and unexpectedly, teaches once more the old, old lesson of the vanity of every human hope and expectation. The man, who, but a few days ago in the possession of full health and strength, was exhibiting to an admiring auditory the undiminished glory of his intellectual capacity, whose mind was, doubtless, filled with schemes and projects for future years, whereby new applause might be obtained and fresh laurels won—this man, by the simplest accident, by the sudden movement of a fractious animal, receives in one moment a fatal injury, lingers for a brief space, and then enters into his long last home.

And, moreover, how certain is the fact that great as will be the impression that will be everywhere created by the melancholy and deplorable occurrence, but a comparatively brief interval will elapse before almost entire forgetfulness will ensue, other men will fill the public eye, and upon them is living and in action will be fastened an attention which no dead men can claim. This, then, is life. I may struggle on through existence, and—take the brightest view—I may be successful in the world, I may win great honour, may achieve great renown, but sometime or other—sooner or later—disease comes upon me, or decay, or accident, and I fall, and I die. I am at once stripped of all the gains I had accumulated, and straightway enter upon another existence, where none of those honours and advantages sought with such eagerness, gained with such toil, will be carried to account. My death may throw a nation into mourning, and relatives and friends into the deepest affliction, nevertheless all things will go on as before, the sun on the morrow will rise again, though my eyes will not see its shining, the birds will sing as sweetly, nature will wear precisely the same aspect, the matters in which I have heretofore had concern will proceed uninterruptedly, simply passing into other hands, all will continue in its accustomed order, unaffected by the mighty change that will have passed over me. Event will succeed event, occurrences happen which would have excited within me the vastest emotion, rousing me to highest exultation, or depressing me to deepest despair, but what tidings

can penetrate the ear of him who sleeps "the sleep which knows not waking?" And a short space having intervened, I shall be comparatively lost sight of, the world at large will in great measure have forgotten me, other forms will have sprung up and engaged the eye, other voices will have occupied the ear. I was great in my day, and was admired and esteemed, but night came, and I was hid from the view. Much grieved after was I at first, and deeply was my loss felt, but then, as I fell into the grave, others started into new life and activity, and the void my death created is sooner or later filled up.

And looking yet further, the same result appears. When I die it is but reasonable to suppose that relatives and friends will sorrow for my death. Yet will that sorrow gradually diminish until at length it will have gone altogether. It is but natural that this should be the case, but who can think without emotion that, on the occasion, mayhap, of some future social gathering in winter, when the snow is falling and the wind is howling, many a jest will be bandied, many a joke enjoyed, many a laugh indulged in, by a merry and happy party, who are *not one whit the less merry or less happy* because one who in former times was never absent from them at these periods, *now* lies mouldering in the bleak churchyard. Deny it who may, there is much bitterness in this thought. We seem in our selfishness to wish that even inanimate things should be in some degree affected by our death, and the idea of all nature reviving when we are never to revive, and again of all the operations of life proceeding unchanged, though the mightiest change has fallen upon us, this idea is, and must be, repugnant. Moreover, the recollection that others will succeed to the public attention and admiration, which we cannot take with us to the grave, so that, as far as the world at large is concerned, a time will come when we shall not be missed, and again, that deeply as they may bewail us now, there will assuredly arrive an hour when even dear relatives and friends will survey the fact of our having mouldered into dust with the most perfect serenity.—Oh, there is something in these thoughts which even in the hearts of the most unselfish among us will awaken a bitter and melancholy emotion!

This then, I say, is life—not indeed, as I may view it in moments of gaiety, but as it appears before me when my mind, in grave mood, ponders the mystery of present and future existence. It is life, as I think of it, when I am roaming in the country on a bright summer day, when, with nothing human in sight, nothing to bring to mind the corruption and pollution with which this world of ours is so darkly identified, my heart is touched with the lesson of purity and peace which Nature, in her loveliness, seems emphatically to teach. Then, as I look up to the broad blue heavens, survey the waving trees, contemplate hill and valley, making up a rich and beautiful scene over which the eye may untiringly wander, I cannot but remember that while the locality, which I am now regarding, presents precisely the same aspect that it has borne mayhap for a number of years past, many are they who, in former time, beheld it, from whose gaze aught that is earthly has long ago faded. And when I come to think how some of these during life struggled and toiled, to what importance they attained, how identified they were with various proceedings—the influence they possessed,—I seem astonished that they should have passed away into another world, and yet that so trifling results should have followed on their death. Then comes down upon me, so to speak, that old lesson of which I have made mention, that this

is in truth but a wretched and insignificant existence, and I seem to long for the period when a brighter and a nobler shall open before me

And there is another time when this same old lesson falls forcibly upon my mind, when at night I walk solitarily on the sea-shore, and hear the mighty waves rolling as they rolled a thousand years ago. They seem to speak of the mighty contrast between their unchangeableness and the change of which man is constantly the subject. Generations after generations have arisen and are gone, but the vast mass of waters presents the same aspect it did when the world was in its infancy—the same laws bind it—it is made subservient to the same uses—confers like benefits, and deals out, in its anger, the same dark destruction.

Now what is the sum and substance of these remarks? Do I advocate retirement from the world in loathing and disgust? Do I advise the casting away all sublunary concerns as unworthy of notice, and the giving exclusive attention to thoughts of things beyond the grave, and contemplation of a future existence? Not so, I have no admiration of the man who selfishly withdraws himself from society, who, preferring the luxurious ease of a perfectly quiet life—a life which involves no excitement—is burdened by no care, entails no mental or physical labour, demands no watchfulness of self—forgets that he is a member of a community, and that, as such, he is bound, as far as in him lies, to advance the common interests. A man may talk to me of the usefulness in great cities and the purity in small villages, and he may enlarge on the peace and the calm that he enjoys in some retired spot far away from noise and tumult—but I say to that man that he is a selfish and unworthy creature, that his shunning the world is a purely selfish act, and that in pursuing such a course he is not travelling in the path dictated by true religion. No, no, my blessing is not with this man—it is with the man who knows and feels that there is much to be done, and who will give a hearty helping-hand to do it—who will not in some secure nook lift up his hands and deplore the wickedness that he hears is going on in large towns, and then express his thankfulness that he has no concern with busy life—who will not do this, but will throw himself manfully into the fight, and struggle hard for the cause of virtue and religion. I look scornfully on the man who, exclaiming, ‘Oh, what a wicked world!’ straightway withdraws himself from it, and not caring to make a single effort to improve it, allows his days to dwindle out in some distant retreat. I admire the man who, indeed, truly estimating life, cognisant to the full how really insignificant at the best is this existence, nevertheless, as life has been given him, struggles and strives with his whole heart and soul—with his utmost energy and power, to work benefit and to do good, who remembers that talents were given not to be hidden and put away, but to be properly and profitably employed. And though even to this man there will be moments of melancholy and fits of gloom, certain is it, that such visitations will be but “few and far between,” weighed down he may be for a very brief period by the contemplation of the littleness and insignificance of his present existence, but quickly is he revived by the recollection that it is his own fault if even in this life he knows not many and great gratifications, and that upon his own head only will rest the blame if, this life ended, he enter not upon another of unfading enjoyment.

INCIDENTS OF THE ROAD, OR, PASSAGES FROM THE LIFE OF A COMMERCIAL TRAVELLER

By JOSEPH ANTHONY, JUN

THE STRANGL HOUSE AT DOLGELLY

When draw the prosperous near me, I forget
The gods of Heaven, but where
Sorrow and suffering in my sight are set,
The gods I feel are there

SCHILLER

IN introducing the "Incidents of the Road" to the readers of *Answorth's Magazine*, the writer would observe that he seeks no higher object than that of amusing, by the narration of circumstances which somewhat deviate from the common occurrences of every-day life. On the attention of lovers of the marvellous he has no claims, possessing neither the gifts of imagination to embellish, or the desire to coin strange things to add to the interest of his story. To those, however, who, in the calm unruffled repose of a stationary life, care but to know the romance of reality through other media than self-experience, these incidents may fairly be presumed to possess some interest, penned, as they are, by one whose home may be said to be everywhere—the quiet village, the crowded town, and mingling also with almost every grade of the great family of man.

In the words of the "Rambler," however, the reader is requested to accommodate his mind to the author's design, and as he will have no interest in refusing the amusement that is offered to him, not to interrupt his tranquillity by studied cavils, or destroy his satisfaction in that which may be already well, by inquiring how it might be better—to be content without pleasure, or pleased without perfection.

With this brief preface will I now proceed to my story, and shouldst thou, reader, ever in thy wanderings have visited that part of the habitable globe where my narrative opens, thou wilt readily allow that a more remarkable spot to harmonise with the singularity of such a meeting as my story will reveal, could not be chosen, were I framing a fiction, and selecting from the most remarkable places in great and glorious Britain.

Hast thou, reader, been a seeker of the grand and beautiful amidst the wild scenery of North Wales? Hast thou looked upon Cader Idris? Hast thou gazed upon that giant mountain from the deep and dark ravine through which winds the road from Machynlleth to Dolgelly, over whose path beetle huge rocks, as pile on pile in majestic ruggedness they mount in aspiring grandeur to the clouds? Hast thou here turned thy gaze towards the opening in the hills which admits the traveller into the rocky pass, and beheld low in the distance the far-spreading lake, and that, too, on a boisterous day, when its waters have been lashed into waves by the wild winds, which howling rushed round and past thee, with a sound like the cries of a troop of demons, or voices of spirits of the frowning rocks? Never have I made the journey without pausing at this romantic pass to gaze each time with increased interest upon it. On the left of the

road, partly hid by a low unmortared stone wall, in many parts shattered by the winds, the rocky height shelves sloping down some two hundred feet to its lowest depth, where, parted by a narrow gullet, whose stream takes its way amidst fragments of rock, it rises again more abrupt and precipitate on the other side, forming a part of the base of the all-majestic Cader

It has been observed that mountain scenery the most impresses the mind with a sense of the greatness of the works of the Creator, certain it is mountains, barren though they be, ever possess grandeur and sublimity. Here, where crested with granite, they raise their unadorned heads to the clouds, they possess a language which must address itself to every beholder, in their boldness of outline and their giant magnitude. Shouldst thou never have beheld the scene, reader, picture it to thy imagination, for here it was where I met with the subject of my narrative.

It was on a boisterous October evening that I had left Machynlleth (so well known for its mementos of Glendower), and night was drawing rapidly on, when I arrived at the wild ravine which I have attempted to describe, and at that part of the road, which cut out of, and winding round, the cloud-capped battlements of rock, leads again to the open country and the snug little town of Dolgelly. Walking beside my horse as he ascended the road, and occasionally checking his willingness to proceed, whilst I paused to drink deeply from the rich fount of Nature's grandeur presented to me, in nearing the summit of the ascent I beheld, a few paces in advance of me the stationary figure of a man, his back was towards me, and he appeared to be absorbed in reflection, intently gazing on the majestic Cader Idris, the sides of which a greyish mist was wreathing, whilst the summit was hid in a dense cloud of vapour.

The sound of my approaching wheels, for a moment, seemed to arouse him from his reverie, turning suddenly round, he cast a hasty glance towards me and my vehicle, and immediately resumed his original position. He was seemingly advanced in years, and to judge by his dress and general appearance, a gentleman. Night was drawing rapidly on, and his old age ever commanded my reverence and respect, and knowing also, that we were miles distant from my habitation, I did not hesitate, on coming up to the spot where he stood, to offer him a seat in my vehicle, should his way chance to be the same as mine. The reader may judge my surprise, when the mountain gazer declined my offer, and that somewhat rudely too, he could not, would walk, and, not even thinking me turned on his heel, and again appeared to become absorbed in the contemplation of the wild scenery before him. I made no reply, but, with an inward ejaculation against human nature in general, and this old gentleman in particular, I resumed my walk by the side of my steed, and, in a few moments, had gained the summit of the ascent. Whilst engaged gathering up the reins and preparing to take in, sent, a voice from behind hailed me, and almost at the same moment, the old gentleman whom I had so recently passed, with more agility than I should have given him credit for possessing, placed his hand on the side of the gig and sprang in. He had been running, and, for a moment or two, was almost breathless, as soon, however, as he was able, he commenced apologising for his former rudeness, and to express how sensible he was of the kindness of my offer, and how gladly he would avail himself of it. His conduct was somewhat extraordinary, but there was a frankness in his manner which

pleased me, and taking my seat beside him, I drove on, not a little amused at the singularity of the proceeding.

I did not, however, hesitate to declare how much the conduct, for which he expressed his regret, had annoyed me at the time, and that I hardly know how to reconcile the sincerity of an apology following so closely upon the heels of an offence. So earnest was the manner of the old gentleman on again expressing his regret that he had acted so boorishly, that I at once banished my half-feigned displeasure, and soon entered with him into an animated and amusing conversation.

There was an unmistakable polish about the stranger, a felicity in the choice of words, a happiness of expression, and a cheerfulness of manner most engaging. For an old man, however, he appeared to be somewhat excitable. As we proceeded he seemed to make himself quite at home with me, and evinced not the slightest hesitation in putting questions in the most direct manner, as to the pleasure or business which had called me into that part of the country. Such impertinences ill-accorded with his otherwise gentlemanly bearing, and yet in return for the little information which I gave him on the subject of his inquiries, I must do my companion the justice to say that he was very prodigal in return. Indeed, when I had informed him I was only on a brief visit to Dolgelly, and purposed quitting the place on the following day, he immediately proceeded to inform me that he was almost a stranger to the place, that his residence was within a mile of Dolgelly, and that he had chosen the locality for a few months' sojourn on account of its quietness and salubrity. When he spoke of the scenery in the neighbourhood, he became positively eloquent, and appeared to be doubly delighted to have found in me a congenial spirit, who did not hesitate to declare with what fervour he, too, had worshipped at the shrine of all-glorious Nature.

There was something so truly original, so much pleasing enthusiasm and buoyancy of spirit in my companion, that I could not resist the opportunity afforded me of seeing more of him, the reader will, therefore, scarcely wonder that we parted with an acceptance on my part of the invitation which he gave me to sup with him and as I put him down at the gate, which led through an avenue of trees to his residence, I assured him he might rely upon my attendance.

Readily will it be imagined that I had not long been an inmate of that spacious and comfortable hostelry, slyly called "The Golden Lion," at Dolgelly, ere I instituted inquiries relative to the occupants of the mansion which my late companion had pointed out to me as his home. The information which I received on the subject was calculated not a little to increase my curiosity and desire to learn more of that eccentric individual. It appeared that the family consisted, besides the old gentleman, of an elderly and a young lady, who, by their hermit-like habits, had much puzzled the good people of Dolgelly. They never entered the town, had been seen by very few, and the servants had proved, since the arrival of the family in the neighbourhood, invulnerable to all attempts made by the curious to learn from whence they came, with other particulars which they were desirous of ascertaining.

One person alone, Doctor —, was on visiting terms with the family, and that chiefly in his professional capacity, and he, even to his most intimate friends, was as close on the subject as the grave. And so it was

known to the natives as the strange house, and its occupants as the strange people

The worthy hostess of the Lion was not a little surprised when, in return for her liberal communication of all she knew, and what she thought, I informed her that I was about to visit the old gentleman, and having seen my steed comfortably housed for the night, and sent off my despatches, I lost no time in proceeding to the place of invitation

It was a lovely night, the cloudless star-gemmed heavens seemed to touch the majestic mountain heights around, whilst, on the very crest of the towering Cadei, one bright planet was glittering in glorious effulgence, seeming like some Queen of Light enthroned and giving audience in that vasty court whose boundaries were heaven and earth—to the innumerable myriads of attendant luminaries beaming around. How beautiful, indeed, is unclouded starlight amidst the mountains!

My coming was evidently expected by the liveried functionary who answered my summons at the door of the mansion. He silently proceeded to usher me into a room, which I had scarcely entered ere I was joined by my host. The apartment was spacious, richly furnished, and ornamented with numerous choice paintings, which the old gentleman seemed not a little proud of, whilst introducing each separately to my notice.

As in his description of the grand and beautiful in nature, he was scarcely less an enthusiast in his admiration of the works of art, the productions of the master-spirits of the age, which he had here gathered together, and which were chiefly modern productions. As I then beheld him, I think I see him now, standing before a large painting which he most highly prized, and changing the position of the candle which he held, until he had obtained the proper light in which I was to inspect it. The subject of the picture was a mountain lake—time, sunset—the waters of the lake, and the angular masses of rock which bounded it, were cast in deep shadow, whilst the summit of the mountain, with its heathery clothing, catching the last rays of the sinking sun, presented itself in contrast as beautiful as it was striking. Such dark green water, such blackish-grey rock, and such sunshine, were never surpassed, perhaps but rarely equalled, on canvas. An eagle, on the wing, was seen crossing the lake, as though it were about to ascend to some crine in the rocks, the whole scene presenting a picture of wild beauty and grandeur, such as would at once impress the beholder that nature itself, and nature only, had been followed by the painter-poet's hand. Ay, in verity, none but a poet, if not in language, in the depths of his soul, was he whose master hand had produced that exquisite work of art. The subject chosen revealed how much had he of the poetry of the beautiful within him, and its surpassing excellence that it had been with him a labour of love. That he had withal a poet's fondness, sought and communed with nature, had midst the hills many a time and oft watched the sinking sun, and gathered from fleeting ray and spreading shadow subjects for that pencil which should gain him immortality. It was, indeed, a surpassing production of true genius. The artist appeared to have had complete dominion over the powerful materials of light and darkness, and had so varied and disposed them under the influence of a poetical mind, as to produce effects, whose beauty was only equalled by their close fidelity to nature. I dwell upon this subject as affording a revelation of the enthusiasm of my entertainer, and in the description which I have given

of the painting, to the best of my memory, have repeated his language. Yes, I think I now behold him whilst expatiating on this prized gem of his collection, his eyes seemed to beam with additional lustre, and as the glowing terms with which he expressed his admiration, and the beauty of the object before us, drew from me scarcely less warm expressions of delight, he appeared to work himself into a state of excitement, almost rapturous.

Our inspection of the paintings over, we drew up to the fire, and I now observed an embroidery frame, a pianoforte, and several ornaments on the massive marble chimney-piece, indicative of there being members of the gentler sex occupants of the house. Strange, although my entertainer must have observed my gaze resting upon these evidences of such proximity, he never alluded to them, but led the conversation, in which I soon found myself discussing the popular subjects of the day, politics and phrenology, music and mesmerism, and I know not what besides. My host's conversational powers were considerable, yet I could not help observing that he endeavoured to prevent the conversation resting on one subject long, and by the time that we sat down together to supper, a listener would have had reason to suppose that we had pretty nearly exhausted the whole range of ordinary conversable matter. The supper provided for us was first-rate—the cookery worthy of a first class professor, the appointments of the table superb, and the liveried functionaries who attended glided around us noiselessly as spirits.

My entertainer certainly spared no effort to make me enjoy his society and my supper, and yet withal I did not feel exactly at my ease. There was an indescribable something about him that kept my curiosity on the alert, and yet baffled it. I could not divest myself of the impression that he was acting a part, and that there was a something of the forced in his seeming gaiety and joyousness. Besides, the absence of the rest of the family was calculated to induce me to believe that my visit had been to them not altogether acceptable, the reflection of which to some extent prevented me from entering fully and freely into the humour of my host, the which, by the way, rapidly increased as he paid close devotion to a delicious punch of his own concoction, the which won from me, with its peculiar excellence, most honest and unqualified praise.

The time wore on, and with the flying hours at length rushed the unpleasant cogitations which, on account of the reasons I have mentioned, since my entering the mansion had been mine. Seeing that there was no likelihood of an addition being made to our party, and that the ladies had in all probability retired for the night, I no longer hesitated to enter fully and freely into the jocular spirit which seemed to inspire my entertainer. The old gentleman was possessed of a tolerable stock of anecdote, most of which, to me, was new, his acquaintance, too, with the German and French, as well as our own drama, was surprising, displaying a memory wonderfully retentive in the various readings which he gave me. But his perception of the ludicrous was, perhaps, the most striking feature in his character, he was highly imaginative, and the odd and whimsical imaginings and conceits which he gave utterance to, were not unworthy of being transmitted to posterity by the pencil of immortal "George." In return I gave him the best things I was acquainted with, and our united cautions at times were certainly not far removed from the boisterous. My companion at times would quit his seat, and, pacing the apartment,

repeat the point of an anecdote which had tickled his fancy, and called forth his laughter, and whilst repeating the words, burst out afresh more loudly than ever. At times, too, it appeared as though he were endeavouring to repress the mirth kindled within him by changing the theme to more sober matter, and, as I imagined, with this view proceeded to recite some lines which he told me were a translation of his own from Schiller. His elocution was most excellent, and I was not a little vexed when, in the midst of the piece, he suddenly came to a pause, a peculiar expression, which I had not observed before, spread over his features, and, to my great astonishment, when he again broke silence, it was with an exclamation of mingled surprise and terror, whilst with starting eyes he looked at me as though I had become suddenly an object of aversion to him. By a strong effort, however, he seemed to master this sudden emotion, and, resuming his seat, the position of which I observed he so altered as no longer to confront me, declared that he had forgotten the remainder of the passage, and challenged me to another bumper from the capacious bowl. Deeply now did he quaff the nectar, again came a change over his humour, and again did his boisterous laugh break on the stillness of the night.

It was during one of these loud bursts of merriment, that I was turning on my chair to the table to replenish my glass, when my attention was suddenly arrested by perceiving, in a distant part of the spacious room, where the candles threw but a glimmering haze, the figure of a female. Scarce had my glance rested upon her, ere she disappeared in the gloom, a slight noise, as of a door gently closing, leading me to believe that she had been on the watch, or probably intending to speak to us, and changing her intention, had suddenly retired.

From the stationary position in which I had seen her, the first supposition appeared to be nearest the truth, and as the other extremity of the large room in which we sat was almost in total darkness, I conceived it to be not unlikely that others might be there concealed observing us. The old gentleman had not noticed my look of surprise, or heard the half-smothered exclamation which on discovering the figure, I had involuntarily made. From the moment, however, that I beheld the form that had so suddenly vanished, a change came over the spirit of my merriment, and with tenfold force my former uneasiness returned. My host's late extraordinary display had somewhat tended to lessen the enjoyment which I had previously derived from his society, but this last most singular proceeding on the part of some other, to me, mysterious member of the establishment, completed the effect. I resolved to quit the place, and, rising from my seat, intimated my intention of returning to my inn.

My entertainer seemed somewhat astonished at the suddenness of my resolve, and appeared determined, if possible, to induce me to prolong my stay. I had, during the earlier part of my visit, in the course of our conversation on the subject, expressed myself as a fond lover of music, and my host now backed his pressing entreaty for me to remain, by volunteering something on the pianoforte if I would consent to stay another hour. Fond as I am of the concord of sweet sounds, I must confess to feeling somewhat annoyed at finding my intention of retiring thwarted, without being positively rude, by the remembrance on the part of the old gentleman, of an expression made at an early part of the night, and at finding it made subservient to keep me longer. To do my host justice, he played

as few amateurs play, he sang also, and though age had much impaired his voice, sweet was it in its feebleness, whilst his execution revealed how thoroughly grounded he had been in the science of song.

Behind the instrument, forming as it were a panel in the wall, was fixed an immense mirror, and as the old gentleman played without notes, and as there was nothing before him to intercept the reflection, I had presented to me, as I stood at his side, his countenance therein fully shown. I know not why, but my gaze was irresistibly attracted to a contemplation of his features thus presented in the bright mirror before me. A few grey hairs were scattered over his brow, lofty and broad, his features marked with the lines of age, but yet handsome, whilst their general expression of high intelligence, with a cast of sadness, confirmed my previously-formed opinion, that the hilarity which I had witnessed had in some measure been forced and his joyousness been anything but from the heart.

After singing two or three very sweet compositions of a plaintive character, he suddenly ceased, nor did he make an observation for full five minutes afterwards, but continued playing a beautifully wild and touching melody, which, from his silence, I judged to affect him deeply. Indeed, he appeared so much absorbed in the performance as to have forgotten me altogether. I remember well that it was just as I was about to address him, when he suddenly came to a pause, resting his fingers on the keys of the instrument, and, raising his eyes, in the huge bright mirror before us his gaze met mine. Great heaven! how strange! What fearful fascination! I could not take my eyes away, whilst my heart felt as though it had been suddenly frozen to ice. The glare of a madman was upon me! It was deep night, and we were alone! The muscles of his mouth, as his eye met mine, contracted in a fearful manner, his face became blanched, his lips livid. Uttering a cry, which was something between a howl and a scream, on the instant he sprang to his feet, throwing himself upon me, whilst I felt his hand grasping at my throat. So sudden, impetuous, and unexpected was the attack, that I stumbled backwards and fell. Rescuing me from his attempted grasp, my fall enabled him to snatch one of the irons from the fireplace, which, quick as light, he raised to strike me. Springing to my feet, I succeeded in partly escaping the intended blow by catching his descending arm, and, seizing him round the body, I hurled him to the ground, and held him firmly down. For a minute, nay, not so much, and yet it seemed an hour, I held that poor maniac there, and the expression of his eyes, as they then glared upon me, will never pass from my memory.

Whilst we were struggling on the ground, with a loud scream a young girl rushed into the room, and throwing herself down on her knees by the old gentleman, she caught hold of one of his hands, and, in the midst of violent emotion, sobbed out,

"My dear, dear father!"

Two of the servants, strong, powerful fellows they were, who, unseen and unheard by me, had rushed into the room, soon released me from the old man, by bearing him to a sofa, despite his violent exertions to break away.

Standing by the sofa, and bending over the lunatic, I now beheld an elderly lady, who, like her companion, was attired in deep mourning. She appeared to give instructions to the servants, addressing them in a

suppressed tone of voice, and they, apparently acting under her directions, coolly bore the old man, in spite of his efforts, past me, whilst a female domestic, who stood with a light, evidently prepared for the case, led the way out of the room. The elderly lady and her young companion were about to follow them, when the former, turning to me, hurriedly expressed her regret for what had occurred, begging me to be seated, and to excuse their absence, which for a short time was indispensable. I silently bowed, they left the room, and, a few moments after, I heard the sound of voices, as though in high altercation, then the noise of a closing door, and all became as still as death.

I was too much excited to sit calmly down, but paced the apartment, with all kinds of strange conjectures crowding in upon me. It was evident that I had been completely deceived in the character of my host—that I had been for hours unconsciously sitting in the company of a madman. There was a mystery, also, in the whole affair, which bewildered me, and it may easily be conceived that I was impatient for the return of the old lady, when I might expect to have some little light thrown on the matter.

I had not to wait long. With her younger companion, she again entered the room, and after, with much apparent concern and kindness of manner, inquiring if I had received any hurt, proceeded to offer me a room for the remainder of the night, if I would accept it, in preference to returning to the town. I declined the offer, and observed that I was sorry to find myself the unwitting cause of circumstances which, as well as for the old gentleman, on their account I so much regretted.

"You are very considerate, very kind, sir," said the youngest of the ladies, addressing me, "but we feel that we have much to apologise to you for. My father had apprised us of your meeting, of your coming, and we have to regret that we did not interpose, or prepare you for that dreadful visitation of mind which, in consequence of severe domestic afflictions, has——"

Emotion prevented her finishing the sentence. The melancholy melody of her voice, the expression of her dark hazel eyes, which, despite her efforts to suppress tears, were rapidly suffusing, caused me to experience a peculiar sensation about the organs of vision, and I am not sure that I did not a little play the woman myself.

"I assure you, sir," said the old lady, interposing to the last speaker's relief, "that he has never been so violent as you have seen him to-night. Indeed, it having been so long since he had a paroxysm at all, we more readily consented to allow him to make his own arrangements to sup with you alone, it was an error in judgment which we must be careful not to repeat, in extenuation, however, I must observe, that we had no conception of the evil with which Mr —— is so unhappily afflicted being so deeply rooted and so serious as this night has revealed it to be."

She paused, but before I could offer a remark, again resumed.

"If I understood Mr —— aright, you are making but a short stay in the neighbourhood?"

"To-morrow evening I purpose quitting Dolgelly," I replied, "allow me to leave my card. I had not one so present to Mr —— on our first meeting, since which, I have forgotten it," and, drawing one forth, I handed it to the old lady, and added, that I was staying at the Lion Hotel.

"You will very much oblige us," she rejoined, whilst hastily glancing at my name, "by not caring to give the result of your visit here to any

of the curious in the town, who, having heard of your visit, may interrogate you thereon. By thus obliging us, you will truly show that sympathy which I am sure you feel for Mr —, and for us."

The reader will readily conceive that I assured the old lady she might rely upon her wishes being attended to, and, feeling that my presence longer could not be otherwise than painful to them, I rose from my seat to depart.

Fre bidding me good night the old lady gave me a pressing invitation to dine with them on the morrow, when she observed Mr — would, in all probability, be so far recovered as to join the party, when he would have an opportunity of apologising to me for that which had passed, without which the recollection of the event would be to him a continued source of pain. Pleading other pressing engagements I begged to decline, expressing at the same time a hope that the old gentleman would soon recover, and that on my next visit to Dolgelly I should hear of his health being thoroughly established. With an understanding that I was to pay them a visit when I next came to that part of the country, and a good-bye and cordial shake of the hand with both ladies, I took my leave. Ushered by a servant I soon found myself at the entrance gate, and on the road to Dolgelly, with the events of the last five hours flitting across my brain like the unconnected fragments of a strange and half forgotten dream.

It was somewhere about two o'clock in the morning when I roused that useful functionary, the Boots, from a sound sleep in one of the elevated domiciles of the Golden Lion. I retired to rest in anything but a composed state of mind, the events of the night had been so exciting a nature, that in my fitful slumbers I again joined in boisterous mirth with the old gentleman, again beheld in the huge mirror his eyes glaring upon me, and, struggling with him again, beheld the fearful blow descending.

In the summer following I once more visited Dolgelly, and on inquiring, I learned that the mansion was untenanted, and the mysterious family, who formerly occupied it, had left, no one knew whither. I never saw or heard of them more.

On reviewing the circumstances which I have related, the reader will probably conclude with me, that it presents one of the many instances which, in this ever changing scene, try and develop the most sterling and beautiful qualities which characterise woman. He will with me perceive that the two individuals of the gentler sex, of whom these pages tell, had, the one, sacrificed friends and comforts, and that peace and tranquillity which should ever smooth the declining years of life, and the other, the world, kindred young hearts like her own, society which she was so highly calculated to adorn, to cheer the hours of a decaying and darkened mind, to watch and tend that which in its state of wreck had become then ever more endeared, and by self-sacrifice and watchfulness to avoid the dread alternative of immolating in the gloomy walls of an asylum one so well beloved. Honour to woman! such instances so exalting to humanity are not rare. Honour to woman for her self-denial, her patient suffering, and her undying affection! Woman, who in harmony with that glorious creation which gave the sun to gladden the earth, despite of the clouds which lower over the paths of life, with her smile irradiates the scene, and until time shall be no more, will be, as she has ever been, the brightest gem of this beautiful world.

A VISIT TO THE LAKES

WERE you ever at the Lakes, gentle reader? If not, pray go there as soon as you can Go when (as Mrs Hemans sings)—

Spring
Has passed by the hills of the stormy north,
And the larch has hung all her tassels forth,

or in June, when the woods and hedges are in all their leafy pomp, or in autumn, when the country has put on its Joseph's coat of many colours, and the Lakes are a deep cold blue, and the fern on the banks bright red, and the moss is sere and yellow, and the birch and beech golden, and the oak has a copperish tint, and the wild cherry (a wonderfully beautiful tree, that!) is rich crimson, and even the black spotted leaves of the sycamore turn a little brown, and the green holly grows yet more green and glossy, as if in mockery of its brethren Go, then, gentle reader, if you can, and should you afterwards meet Miss Trollope, you may tell her that you have seen a "fall" as brilliant in colouring as she ever could have beheld in the American forests

But before going to the Lakes, listen to me while I open the lips of wisdom If you possess in your wardrobe any strange outlandish bonnet, shaped like a coal-skuttle, or the lid of a stewpan or a soup-tureen, any gown of startling pattern or material, or shortness, or scantiness, or fulness, or any other "ness," any cloak that was thought admirable twenty years ago, any scarlet boots, or gloves of tender green, take them with you, they will do charmingly for the Lakes And you, too, gentle gentleman reader, should you possess any wide-awake, outraging the ideas of propriety of all your middle aged female aunts and cousins, any very knowing shooting-jacket, any trousers of any of those charming patterns that make your legs like animated gridirons, take, oh, take them with you! they will just do for the Lakes For the singularity of your dress shows the singularity of your mind, and because greatness is singular, singularity is supposed to be great, dress then like an Ojibbeway Indian trying to be fashionable, and some people will consider you a great genius, it is only commonplace people who care how they are clothed, you, gentle reader, are as indifferent about it as "the lilies of the field," and I dare say, "Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of you," indeed I am quite sure of it And pray suffer from no *mauvaise honte* about your costume, do not walk along with the uncomfortable idea that every one is looking at you Put on what you will, the chances are twenty to one that you meet every day half a-dozen people as singularly attired Every one tries to show the outward signs of a great genius here, every one cries out, "No one cares for dress here," and every soul you meet, or, perhaps, I ought to say every *body*, is a witness to it I never should feel the least surprise to see people walking about like the American Indians, with a blanket and a wooden skewer as their sole costume, and were it not for the coldness of the climate and the one policeman I discovered at Ambleside, I dare say before this they would have returned to the primitive fig-leaf, perhaps, though, fig-trees may be scarce so far north, or that costume, though biblical, might have been considered by dear departed Mr Wordsworth "*contra bonos mores*" But in what-

ever costume it pleases you, your maid, or your valet, that you should appear in, go! and whether you wear a fig-leaf or not, or whether you go in spring or autumn, you will, I know, be charmed with all you see, if only the genius loci (which vulgar-minded people might call the rain) suffers you to see anything

Do you remember, gentle reader, a certain story of Sir Walter Scott and his better half (how excellent must she have been!) watching the gambols of the lambs?—

“How charming,” cried the bard, “to watch their frolics! how beautiful they look now——” but, my dear, you do not watch them, you are not thinking of them”

“Indeed, my dear, I am,” answered the worthy lady, “I was thinking just at that moment how good they would be—*cold, with mint-sauce*”

Great souls are seldom understood by those nearest them, that sweet saint, that sat by Walter’s side, evidently did not understand him, nor did my friend, whom I had carried with me on my travels, me, when, as Windermere burst on our sight, I cried, with an oratorical sweep of the arm that hit him on the nose—

“How beautiful—how deep—how blue!”

“Humph!” he grunted out, rubbing his injured nose, “humph, lakes generally are deepish I hope to Heaven this is a *very* deep one, as then we shall get char for dinner, my boy, think of that!”

Is it possible, O Windermere! that pilgrims visit thee for the sake of thy fish?

This took place on the *Last Minstrel* (a coach, gentle reader, not an aged individual with a harp upon his back), as we drove from the Windermere station to Bowness. ~~Close to the station~~ we passed Ellaray, the house of Professor Wilson, it was then for sale, abandoned by its owner, principally, the gossips of the country said, because the good people who came by the cheap-trip trains, would assert the boasted freedom of true-born Britons, by breaking in and walking all over the grounds—a phase of English liberty better contemplated in theory than witnessed in practice

Bowness, the first town in the lake district, I do not much admire, it is a gay place, much given to dinners, balls, and immense picnics, considers itself fashionable and quite in the world, and of the world, and looks down upon its next neighbour, Ambleside, with supreme contempt. Ambleside is literary, and gives tea-parties and reading-parties, instead of balls and routs, and, of course, thinks Bowness a very light frivolous sort of place, speaks of it and its inhabitants with a mild pity that singularly aggravates them. Of course the two places hate each other with the cordial hatred that often springs up amongst near neighbours in the country (hear it not, ye bucolical poets!), but where people have no occupation (and after all, watching the weather can scarcely be called an occupation), it is not astonishing they should sometimes hate their neighbour, it is, at all events, something to do. Opposite Bowness lies a cluster of islands, the principal being Curwen’s Island, from it the views, both up and down the lake, are very beautiful, but it has little beauty in itself, being spotted all over with trees, by which means all effect is spoiled. On it stands a singularly ugly Italian villa, which assorts as well with the scenery round it, as a wart on a beauty’s face with the other features. This is not original, gentle reader, it was the term used by Lord —, when asked

by the celebrated Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, whether he advised her to destroy the old palace of Woodstock. From Bowness, the *Lady of the Lake* or the *Lord of the Isles* (steamers, good reader!) will convey you to the head of the lake. I declined both, however, and mounting again the *Last Minstrel*, proceeded to Lowood. Close to this place is the house where Mrs Hemans lived, it bears the romantic name of Dove's Nest—a name, however, not bestowed by the gentle poetess, as I once imagined. It is a quiet, cottage-looking place, commanding a most lovely view, not grand or awful, but a view of quiet, gentle, comfortable beauty, wood and lake, and enough mountain for the picturesque, and not too much for comfort, a lovely view it was, as the sun shone upon the glassy lake, and the blue mountains melted softly away in the distance. No wonder a poetess chose here her home, no wonder she wrote so voluminously. I almost think a steam-engine put down here might have been inspired. We sat down for some time in her favourite bower, a whitewashed old building, talking with the good dame of the house, who had been there when Mrs Hemans had it. She chatted away readily about her, told us she loved much new milk and cold meat, and *would* walk about the country with only a veil on her head and no bonnet. A mode of proceeding that shocked our informant much. "It wasn't 'spectable," she said, "to see a lady walking about in that fashion, and so I told her, I ain't afraid of speaking up, I ain't, and I've given her a bit of my mind about it scores, ay, and scores again of times. But she was a nice lady, though she wouldn't wear a bonnet." And then, by an insensible digression, the good woman slipped into politics, and here certainly she was not at all afraid of speaking up. She gave us her opinions freely about "the people," and "the people's rights," and about the bishops, whom she described as "a set of auld bodies fit for nought in this world nor the next neither, I'm thinking. What business have they with all the money, I wonder? Why don't they give it to the young clergymen, nice young men they be. I've known many of them myself, and some of them as good-looking young fellows as ever I clapped eyes on." At the same time she had a great horror of "Methodies," whom she considered worse than the bishops.

Leaving our chatty political guide at last, we went on to the head of the lake. Here the two great feeders of the lake, the Rothay and Brathay, like rival beauties, each try to entice you. Follow first the Brathay—the Brathav, now sleeping in grassy meadows, now spreading out its waters into a lake-like pool, and then hurrying on past the chapel into the lake. Follow its course for a mile or so, and then turn off here is Loughrigg Tarn, like a pocket looking-glass, further on, Elterwater, like a swamp—indeed some people require to be told it is a lake. Pass on under Langdale Pikes, through a country most wild and pastoral, and here is Blea Tarn, a wood of Scotch firs on one bank, behind the lofty lumpy pikes, and all around as grand, as desolate, as awful as painter or poet could wish. Now on, past Langdale Water, a lake, that is all I can find to say of it, and so to Conistone Water. This is a charming lake, a comfortable, quiet, good-tempered looking lake. The hills slope away gradually, and the wood nestles down to the very water's edge, no frowning crags or wrinkled rocks look down upon you, no mountains of any size lift their head, except the Old Man, and every

fine old man he is, though, when last I saw him, as blue with the evening mist as any young lady of forty or thereabouts need wish to be. Everything round you is quiet, and countryfied, except indeed a boathouse of Mr Marshall's. This is a very imposing building on the water's edge, massive with turrets, and a low-browed, arched entrance—a perfect plaster specimen of the old gatehouse—though where it is to lead to, unless to some palace under the hill that Mr Marshall has in imitation of the king of the faeries, I can't tell. However, despite the gatehouse, 'tis a charming lake, and when the sun sets, and the water is a sheet of glass (Bohemian glass, crimson and gold), I don't know one that can surpass it, not even Windermere, which in its character it most resembles. And now back by Eastwaite Water to the junction of Rothay and Brathay, but first look at Wray Castle, an edifice of the nineteenth century—Gothic, very imposing to those who are imposed on by a certain arrangement of stone and mortar—very imposing indeed, I may say, and only to be rivalled, I will not say equalled, by Goodrich Castle on the Wye, where, as you cross the drawbridge, you perceive that all the servants' offices look into the moat,—an ingenious device for drowning one's domestics in case of siege. And now up the Rothay to Ambleside, a pretty quaint town, preserving a great deal of the air of an out-of-the-way country town, despite the great influx of visitors in summer, and a gas lamp having been substituted for the cross on the steps in the market-place. Here lives Miss Martineau—that apostle of Mesmerism and the Rights of Women, who draws forth such warm praise from my Lord John Russell's lips, has set up her tent here. Within a mile or two of this place is Rydal Mount, Mr Wordsworth's. (This of course refers to a period anterior to the great poet's death.) And here, gentle reader, stop and meditate for a moment on the surpassing attractions of this land. How varied must be its beauties, how great its charms, that could win Cole-ridge, Wordsworth, Southey, Miss Martineau, Professor Wilson, Dr Arnold, Mrs Hemans, and Mrs Trollope (for Mrs Trollope we claim for the lakes, Mrs Trollope lived within sight of the mountains of Ullswater, Mrs Trollope surely was a laker.) How great, I say, must be its attractions to win all these to its bosom, for though many of them, one could easily understand, loving the country and rejoicing in its beauty as if it were their mistress, yet some of them surely the world is not apt to consider pastorally or bucolically given. No one ever took Miss Martineau for a shepherdess, certainly not for a Dresden china shepherdess. She does not give one at all the idea of a lady likely to carry a crook in her hand tied with a knot of blue ribands, while a pet lamb with a ditto round its neck followed. Nor can one conceive that the great rival of Malthus, the great antagonist of philoprogenitiveness (God forgive us the use of that long word!), should come without some very great attraction into a district where the children seem to be produced like the chickens in the new incubation process, a hundred at a time—a process which the march of intellect has discovered to do away with that exceedingly old fashioned, and entirely used-up animal, the domestic hen. Miss Martineau is a lady whose activity of mind and body we much admire, though even yet we have scarce got over our wonder at it. By turns politician, theologian, doctor, romance, historian, traveller, philosopher, and prophet, the mixture of characters is quite bewildering. Then as for activity of body, she travels

over all the country with a knapsack on her back, climbing mountains, exploring waterfalls and glens, and almost every year she starts off to some new country—Egypt, America, Turkey. For my own part, I never should be astonished to hear that she had started on a journey to the moon, and should in such a case venture to recommend to her the same stages that were proposed to the first Duchess of Newcastle. Her grace had been inquiring tenderly of a learned doctor where she was to lie of nights if she took a journey to the moon? to which the able reply was, “that her grace had built so many castles in the air, that she could well afford to lie in a different one every night, however long the journey might be.” It is an old story, gentle reader, of Charles II’s time, you may have heard it a hundred times before, but I think the advice applies to Miss Martineau as well as to her grace.

Then there is Mrs Trollope, who ever pictured Miss Trollope giving herself up to country pursuits, counting her chickens before they were hatched, for instance? Not I for one.

But let us return to Ambleside. Miss Martineau’s house, commanding most lovely views of Loughrigg and the head of the lake of Windermere, is next door to the Independent Meeting House, a building of most singularly unadorned simplicity. It is here that Miss Martineau resides in winter,—it is here she studies and writes, in summer she collects the materials, in this respect resembling that thrifty animal the ant. About a mile hence, along a wooded beautiful road, with hills all round, and on one side Lady Fleming’s park, you come to Rydal Mount. Here, just at the foot of the hill leading to his house, we had the good luck to meet the late great poet,—a tall, thin old man stooping slightly over his staff, with long silvery hair hanging on his shoulders, and a singularly benevolent expression of countenance, he was very like his portraits (and in the lake districts portraits of him are as common as those of her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen, or Field-Marshal the Duke of Wellington, in London), but he was rapidly descending the hill of life, and his stooping figure and shrill reedy voice showed it. Yet he was still full of life, as the following anecdote will show. A lady, a short time previously, was introducing some friends to him, after each person’s name she added, “A great admirer of yours, Mr Wordsworth, —‘a profound admirer of yours, Mr Wordsworth,’”—“a worshipper, I may say, of yours, Mr Wordsworth.” The first few times Mr Wordsworth simply bowed, but when the good lady had got to her fifth friend, and still continued her running commentary, he could stand it no longer.

“Of course, ma’am!” he cried, waving his hand impatiently,—“of course, ma’am! every one is a profound admirer of mine.”

Poets say it is a monstrous hard thing to climb the steep where Fame’s proud temple shines afar, I think some of them might also add that, when they do get there, they find it in some respects a very uncomfortable lodging. Every tourist who used to pass through Rydal had three wishes, the first, to be introduced to Mr Wordsworth, the second, to see him, the third, to enter his library and carry off some article from it as a relic. The first was very difficult to obtain, the second depended principally on chance, but the third, or, at all events, the first part of it (as the house didn’t walk about the country like its master), they could generally always gratify if they would. The number of people, consequently, who begged

to be allowed to look into the library of Rydal Mount was considerable, and the quantity of stray articles they carried off scarcely less so. It is a sad thing to say, but true nevertheless, that Mr Wordsworth, if he didn't commit any sins himself, was the cause of a great many being committed by others. I myself never was exposed to the temptation of having my fingers within an inch or two of Mr Wordsworth's paper-knife, or pen-wiper, or seals, or may be a letter half written; and, therefore, not having stolen anything myself, I am free to confess (excuse, pray, this House of Commons' idiom) that I think it exceedingly wrong in my neighbours doing so, not to mention that it must have been rather a distracting mark of admiration to the poet. Then, too, on Sundays the tourists went to church, not to pray to God (as you might do, gentle reader, or I), but to get "a good look at Mr Wordsworth," or, as I have heard some more elegantly express it, "a squint at the old boy." I am very sure, if the clerk had been asked during the season what the church was built for, he would have answered, "to allow strangers to see Mr Wordsworth;" indeed, from his asking you so carefully when you entered, if you would not like to sit where you could see Mr Wordsworth, it was evident, without asking, that such was his idea. But now, alas! these pleasant days are over, and Rydal has lost its chief attraction, so we shall quit it, and pass along the side of the quiet, woody lake—of all the lakes the most calm and retired-looking,—the shores are wooded, and the islands are wooded, no boat floats on its surface, no noise is heard, save (except, indeed, your evil star sends you a jingling car full of talking tourists) the noise of the summer wind in the tree tops, or a wild duck flying clamorously out of the reeds that fringe the lake, or a heron spreading his vast wings and flying lazily to his home in one of the islands. There are here no impudent stuck-up houses staring you in the face,—no boards pointing to hotels and boarding-houses,—no eloquent papers (eloquent, indeed! for every one understands them just as well whether stuck wrong-side uppermost or the right way) telling of "furnished lodgings to let." Make the most of the absence of all these, for at Grasmere their name is legion. Grasmere is beautiful still, a few years ago it must have been most beautiful, a few years hence the beauty will almost have left it, for its shores will be a perfect town,—almost, I say, for no one can build on the tops of the mountains. Every year fresh houses spring up here,—every year you miss some favourite spot,—every year fresh boards, announcing "this eligible freehold land to be sold for building purposes," are stuck up.

O, English people! English people! why will you say you are fond of the beauties of Nature, and then deface her by building up frightful staring houses, with stables and double coachhouse, and "a productive walled kitchen-garden," stuck against the side of a hill, so that no one may suspect you of not having it? Why will you build what house-agents call "spacious and desirable mansions," which you have no sooner furnished than you sell or become bankrupt? If you cannot live without your desirable mansions, go to town, to Westbourne Terrace, Sussex Square, Hyde Park Gardens, or Portland-place, there are spacious desirable mansions in abundance, all after your own heart,—edifices of wonderful simplicity, plain walls with rows of holes in them, square or oblong, as the case may be, there you may have gas, and fresh fish,

and pale ale—all more useful than lakes, or mountains, or trees,—there live, I pray you, and if you sigh for the beauties of nature, and must have a little green to look at, stick pots of geraniums in your drawing-room window. O, English people! respectable, money-making, money-loving English people! stay in these your fit haunts. If rust and moths corrupt, and thieves break in and steal in town, do they not do the same in the country? And there you have no one to prevent the thieves breaking in and stealing, while here, in every street, in every square, by the glare of the gas and the pale light of day, you have blue-coated individuals pacing along, whom you respectable people call policemen, there, too, have you not in every street temples—plaster, or brick, or stone—in which on Sundays you can read your prayer-books or fall asleep? What more can you want? Stay! oh, stay in the Great City, I implore you! for if, oh, respectable English people, you *do* come into a pretty country, what do you do? You build your spacious and desirable mansion, and then you level all the rough rocky ground before it, and in lieu of it make a lawn, smooth and level and out of character, as a billiard-table would be, and over the lawn you make yellow snake-like gravel-walks to twist and twine uncomfortably, and all around you first of all put up a high wooden paling, and then within you plant a belt of trees, so that no one can look in, and *you*, oh, respectable English people! cannot look out, and then, looking over your lawn and yellow walks and small laurels,—(which you plant there because every one has laurels on their lawn),—looking, I say, over these at a thick belt of larch, or spruce, or Scotch firs, you talk of your charming prospect! And then you toil so laboriously after the Picturesque, which after all, in your heart of hearts, you only care for accompanied with sandwiches and sherry. You make such picnics! You go to lonely mountain turns, your mind disquieted with the idea of the ale being spoiled by being shaken, or the forks being left behind, or the driver sitting inadvertently on the top of the veal-pie. You select a nice smooth spot, there you at once sit down and eat and drink. The nice smooth spot is at the bottom of a hollow, and of course commands no view, the tarn is beyond that rising ground, but you know it is near you, and the mountain air makes you so hungry, and after all, the interior of the veal-pie is a very charming prospect. and then, when lunch is over, one says, “How dismal it is up here,” a second, “How cold,” a third, “I’m sure it’s going to rain, we’d better be getting home,” and you gather up your possessions, and home you go as fast as the lunch will allow you. and of the tarn you have seen little more than you would have had you remained in Westbourne Terrace, and by the side of the mountain tarn, lonely and solemn as those on which Sir Galahad found floating for him magic boats, you leave your sandwich papers blowing about, and your eggshells, and your broken bottles. O, English people! is the grandeur of Nature revealed to you only in your plaster heathen temples? Would you not cry, “the glory has departed from my house,” if you found old sandwich papers blowing about there? Is not the mountain holy ground? And then, oh, pilgrims of the beauties of Nature! you remember Helvellyn only as the place where one of your hard eggs was bad, and Thirlmere or Grasmere, you don’t know which, was that beautiful place where you had such excellent eel-pie, and at Blea Tarn the ale was forgotten, and Conistone was the place where you were all so hungry, and Patterdale

you did not see, you got half-way there, and then you discovered the prog-basket was left behind, so you came back. Where the treasure is, there will the heart be also. "Is not this lake beautiful?" exclaimed an Englishman to his companion, as they crossed the lake of Como on their way to dinner at a friend's. "Oh, hang the lake," answered the Englishman, No 2; think only of the good roast leg of mutton we shall have at Smith's to-night.'

Between Rydal and Grasmere, on the old road, is the Wishing Gate. Whoever wishes for anything here will surely obtain it, if it be for his good, so if he does not get it, he may be sure it was a bad wish. I never heard of any one getting their wish, a proof how evil inclined the heart of man must be.

About a couple of miles from Grasmere is Eastdale Tarn, a wild mountain lake, no trees, no shrubs take away from its naked beauty, rocks and steep crags, and knolls covered with moss and fern, surround it, no living thing is seen round it save a few sheep, no sound of life disturbs the hoarse murmur of the stream which flows from it, except the cry of the hawk floating far, far above your head. There is something wonderfully solemn, awful, indeed, in the stillness and solitude round you, and how any one with a soul could have christened the stream that rushes from the tarn to the lower regions "Buttermilk Gill," I cannot at all tell! Some people think to improve matters by calling it "Sour-milk Gill."

After descending from Eastdale Tarn, you follow the course of the Rothay to Thirlmere, a lake with many *aliases*. Between the Rothay and the high road, as you go to this lake, lies Dunnaibraise, the grave of a king, he lies more royally interred, with these mighty mountains round him, than if he lay in Westminster Abbey or St George's. The wind moans and laments over his grave, and the clouds ever weep above it, and though this, doubtless, is gratifying to the royal shade, it is much less so to the unfortunate traveller—"Too much of water hadst thou? Hamlet might have said)—who remembers Dunnaibraise more for the wetting he got there, I fancy, than for its royal grave. But, indeed, to all this district, charming as it is, may be applied, most truthfully, the few but pithy lines written on Devonshire weather—

The west wind always brings us rain,
The east wind blows it back again,
The south wind brings us rainy weather,
The north wind rain and cold together

Of all the lakes, Thulmere, Wythburn Water, Leathes Water, or Brackmere, for all these names belong to it, is, perhaps, the most disregarded by travellers, few care for more than a glimpse of it as they pass along the high road, a great injustice, I think. It certainly has no great sheet of water to boast of, and the causeway that divides it nearly in two, perhaps, makes it look less than it is, but the head of the lake is singularly fine and wild, and the lower reach is most charmingly pastoral and quiet. I love it dearly, and whenever I become a laker, here will I set up my tent, or maybe build a "spacious and desirable mansion" like my neighbours.

From this point many ascend Helvellyn, which lies on your right as

you advance towards the head of the lake It was by the side of a tarn on this mountain, the Red Tarn, that the remains of the poor pilgrim of nature, Gough, were found, after having been watched for nearly three months by his dog Though the story has been told so often in prose and verse, in newspaper, magazine, and guide-book, it still lends an additional interest to this mountain, and few can pass by the spot where he died, alone on the wild mountain-side, without heaving a sigh, especially if the solitary tourist remembers that a stone giving way beneath his feet, a slight fall, a false step even, and the death of Gough, minus the dog, may be his own

The lines of Walter Scott on this subject are so well known, I feel almost ashamed of inserting them, thinking it an insult to my gentlest of readers to suppose that he or she does not know them They are so beautiful, though, I cannot refrain —

Dark green was that spot 'mid the brown mountain heather
Where the pilgrim of nature lay stretch'd in decay,
Like the corpse of an outcast abandon'd to weather,
Till the mountain winds wasted the tenantless clay
Not yet quite deserted, though lowly extended,
I or faithful in death his mute fav'rite attended,
The much loved remains of her master defended,
And chas'd the hill fox and the raven away

How long didst thou think that his silence was slumber?
When the wind wav'd his garment, how oft didst thou start?
How many long days and long weeks didst thou number,
Lest he faded before thee, the friend of thy heart?
And oh! was it meet that—no requiem read o'er him,
No mother to weep, and no friend to deplore him,
And thou, little guardian, alone stretch'd before him—
Unhonour'd the pilgrim from life should depart

Gentle reader, I leave you now Much more have I to say to you, much more gossiping to pour into your ear, but with the lines of the mighty master ringing in your ear, how dare I speak Gentlest of gentle readers! when next I meet you, I will take you with me to Derwent-water and to Buttermere We will discourse together of the celebrated curl of the former lake, the celebrated beauty of the latter, we will talk of treason and of felony But 'sufficient for the day is the evil thereof,' and so, most patient and gentle reader, I wish you heartily farewell! "A word that has been, and must be"

LONGFELLOW

It is with pleasure that we note the increasing circulation of American poetic literature in this country. Politics, and its growing nationality, may yearly widen the separation of the young republic from its parent stock, but our literature must ever be one and the same. The poets on either shore of the Atlantic have drunk of a common fountain, the same intellectual blood, so to speak, swells the hearts of each—alike they boast the names of Chaucer, Milton, and Shakspeare as their fathers, whether they tune that same instrument which these touched with their inspiring hands, under the primeval shades, and beside the gigantic rivers of the West, or among the homely pasture grounds of merry England. So it should be, and so, we rejoice to say, it is. Nowhere are our living bards more highly appreciated than in America, and the increasing popularity of American poets among us, shows that we are not backward to acknowledge our intellectual fraternity.

It is at present our task, from the writings of this "goodly band of brethren," more especially to select for consideration those of Mr Longfellow. An edition of this poet's works now lies before us, heralded by a somewhat grandiloquent preface, from the pen of Mr Gilfillan, at the style of whose encomiums on his author we should, by-the by, be so ungrateful as to cavil a little, were *we* the prefaced poet. But Mr Longfellow's success does not depend on the style or taste of any extraneous panegyric, the unaffectedness and healthful morality of his book will ensure it the favour of all right and refined minds. He has not, certainly, as Mr Gilfillan expresses it, "been dandled like a lion cub on the lap of Terror," and this enviable position not having been his lot, he has wisely abstained from aiming at the themes to which so magnificent an education would have entitled him to aspire, those which he has chosen are natural, pleasing, in many cases eminently poetical, but always congenial to his mind, and well adapted to his powers. Here and there, it is true, one falls upon a commonplace subject, not dressed with originality or power sufficient to atone for its every-day face, but these are forgiven for the sake of the beauty which lies around them, and which possesses two great charms—a very general absence from that mannerism which disfigures too many of the best productions of our living poets—and another far higher, the quiet, manly tone of faith, conscientiousness and resignation which everywhere pervades and exalts it. The book before us, though small in size, contains many parts and parcels, and much more matter for consideration than our limits will allow us to dwell on. It begins with a prelude, in which the past and present tenses are, to our mind, somewhat uncomfortably mixed, and in which the diction is occasionally feeble, and almost childish, but the succeeding poem, beginning, "I heard the trailing garments of the Night," is very beautiful, and there is something most satisfying both to mind and ear in its slow, measured movement. Another poem in the group, entitled, "Voices of the Night," is also a favourite of ours, it is addressed to the planet Mars, the chosen star of the poet's especial regard, who thus sings of it —

The night is come, but not too soon,
 And sinking silently—
All silently, the little moon
 Drops down behind the sky

- There is no light in earth or heaven,
 But the cold light of stars,
 And the first watch of night is given
 To the red light of Mars

Is it the tender star of love—
 The star of love and dreams?
 Ah no! from that blue tent above
 • A hero's armour gleams

And earnest thoughts within me rise,
 When I behold afar,
 Suspended in the evening skies
 The shield of that red star

O star of strength! I see thee stand,
 And smile upon my pain,
 Thou beckonest with thy mailed hand,
 And I am strong again

Within my breast there is no light,
 But the cold light of stars,
 I give the first watch of the night
 To the red planet Mars

The star of the unconquered will,
 He rises in my breast,
 Serene, and resolute, and still,
 And calm, and self possessed

And thou too, whosoever thou art,
 That recdest this brief psalm,
 As one by one thy hopes depart,
 Be resolute and calm

O fear not in a world like this,
 And thou shalt know ere long—
 Know how sublime a thing it is
 To suffer and be strong

There is another poem in this group which we cannot mention so favourably—"The Midnight Mass for the Old Year." What is the reason, and what is the rule, of those short lines, or rather scraps of lines, at the end of each stanza? Some find a rhyme in two lines above, some do not, some are twice the length of others, some are a useless repetition of words, as "a king, a king," "sorely, sorely," or of the preceding line, as

It is a sound of woe—
 A sound of woe

The effect, as you drop suddenly on these abrupt and misshapen exclamations or assertions, is almost ludicrous, and what does the author propose to gain by them? Not music, surely, nor strength, for in almost every case their omission would not take one jot from the sense. Is it then for the sake of the irregularity, *per se*, that he introduces them? It is a debateable point whether irregularity in metre, however much sanctioned by subject, or an undeniably musical fancy, is not always to be regarded with indulgence rather than favour, but the irregularity here seems to us to possess no such excuse for its appearance.

To the "Voices of the Night" succeeds a spirited ballad—"The Skeleton in Armour," and then come some miscellaneous poems, of which the most striking to our mind are "Excelsior," "A Glean of Sunshine," and the "Arsenal of Springfield." There is a sweetness, an uncomplaining sorrow, a holiness in "The Glean of Sunshine," extremely touching. "The Arsenal of Springfield" is very different, but not less beautiful, in style. The metre is peculiarly vigorous, as well as musical. Take for example the following stanzas—

Ah, what a sound will rise, how wild and dreary,
When the death angel touches those swift 'eys,
What loud lament, and dismal misere,
Will mingle with their awful symphonies!

I hear even now the infinite fierce chorus,
The cries of agony, the endless groan,
Which, through the ages that have gone before us,
In long reverberations reach our own

How infinitely more harmonious, as well as classical, is such a metre as this, than the short-lined, fancy measures in which so many lyrics of the present day are written! Among the "earlier poems" which we find best in order, is a blank-verse piece upon "Autumn," very Wordsworthian in style and feeling. An error has escaped the author in the last line, he tells us that the "man of fervent heart," who looks "on days well spent," shall go "to his long resting-place without a tear." We know, of course, what the poet means, otherwise the expression would convey the idea that such a man went to his grave unwept. "*Pang*" would, we think, be the better adapted word, but this is beyond our province,—we may criticise, but not suggest.

Among the "Poems on Slavery," the "Warning" is good and vigorous, only we wish the word in the last line—the reader will see what we mean when he comes to it—had been more *real*, and a little more dignified.

To the "Poems on Slavery" succeeds a "Dramatic Poem," which appears to us to have too little plot, and too much *talking poetry*, to make a good play, and too little flow, and too much of the familiar play-phrasology, to make a good poem. There is, moreover, an appearance of effort and self-consciousness in it, from which the rest of the book is remarkably free.

And now, to our great contentment, we have reached "Evangeline," the crown of the volume. The subject of this poem is full of capabilities for pathetic and picturesque imagery, and it is in itself no small praise to say that Mr Longfellow has improved these to the full. He has woven a very touching tale of private sorrow into one of the most affecting incidents recorded perhaps in the history of any nation, and has given a life-like distinctness to his characters, and a graphic colouring to the scenery in which he places them, which makes us feel as if, at some period or other of our existence, we must have sauntered with the farmers of Grand Pre down their village street, and afterwards explored with them the cedar-vaulted breadths of the Mississippi. Before we proceed to give a sketch of the story, or to present our readers with any portion of this beautiful poem, we must prepare them for a fact which will at first, we fear, startle them, as it did us, from their anticipations of enjoyment. "Evangeline" is written in hexameters, a metre so un-

natural, so ill adapted to the English language, so incapable of being made truly pleasing in it, that we marvel how any poet could have the heart to sacrifice to it a creation of his brain so valuable as the one in question. The best English hexameters can never, after all, be considered as anything but a mere *tour d'adresse*, and should never be employed save as a passing, though ingenious, whim. Had it been otherwise, they would not have slept, unemployed by our successive poets, through so many centuries. In Germany they are much used, but the German language is full of dancing or rolling dactyls, which with us are very rare, and the English hexameter writer is often obliged to piece out his dactyls with hard, sturdy little words, which entirely deprive them of their essential character. But it is not so much its want of music, as the ungenueness of the English hexameter, which displeases us. It is an anomaly, of no nation or language. The Roman toga has been so pulled and squeezed into the English coat, that it is now no costume at all. In adopting the Latin metre, *all* its rules must be observed, or it is *not* adopted, in English this is impossible, the long and short are arbitrarily decided, according to the necessity of the writer, and the run of the line depends, or ought to depend, entirely on the emphasis of the sense, which induces that cantering and sing-song movement, degrading to the poem, and wearying or vitiating to the ear of the reader. Occasionally this canter stops short, and we are left to stumble and flounder among stocks and stones, through which, with some difficulty, a very rough way is made out—as in “*Evangeline*,” page 184 —

Children's children sat on his knee, and heard his great watch tick

We were obtuse enough, we confess, to be a long time making our way through this pass, and even now, when we return to it, we find some difficulty in hitting again upon the track. In justice, however, to Mr. Longfellow, we must say that these instances with him are rare, at least in “*Evangeline*,” in the translation from the Swedish, which follows, they are more frequent. There is a blemish, however, peculiar to Mr. Longfellow's hexameters, to which we must advert before entering upon the pleasant part of our task, and this is the constant employment of two monosyllables for the concluding spondee. This is not positively contrary to rule, because we find examples of it occasionally in Latin verse, but it is almost always singularly unmusical. For example —

Then came the labourers home from the field, and serenely the sun sank,
Into the evening air a thin blue column of smoke rose
Father Felician advanced with *Evangeline*, greeting the old man

In the specimen that follows there is a double objection to be made —

All were subdued and low as the murmurs of love, and the *great sun*
Looked with an eye of love through the golden vapours around him

Here, in order to gain the rhythm of the line an emphasis must be laid on “*great*,” which suggests the idea that the poet wishes to impress us with the superior magnitude of the diurnal orb in question over those of other systems. No doubt, this may be astronomically correct, but such a scientific distinction is hardly needed in the pastoral poem of “*Evangeline*.” The natural emphasis of the sense would undeniably make a trochaic of these two monosyllables. There are many instances of this kind to be met with in both parts of the poem

But it is now high time that we should lead our readers over the threshold upon which we have so long detained them, only premising first, as indeed we are bound to do, after having said so much against hexameters in general, and a little against Mr Longfellow's in particular,—that all which could be done to lessen the irksomeness and importunacy of an unfortunate metre, has been done in this case, by the beauty of expression, the unaffectedness, and steady eloquence of the poet. This is, no doubt, a triumph, but why, alas! should he have to triumph over himself?

The foundation of the tale is the despotic ejection of the French colonists of Nova Scotia, then called Acadia, from their homes and their country by the authority of the British Government. They were accused of assisting the French, by whom they had, in 1713, been ceded to England, against their new masters, and their exile and dispersion was the means employed to prevent the recurrence of the offence. At Grand Pre the men were suddenly assembled in the church, and, after hearing this tyrannical sentence, were there detained prisoners till the time of their embarkation—a scene of anguish and confusion in which wives and husbands, parents and children, were carried to different ships, and thus separated, in some cases never to be re-united on earth.

The poem opens with a beautiful description of the village of Grand Pre and of the surrounding scenery, and goes on to tell us of Benedict Bellefontaine, its wealthiest farmer,—of the beautiful Evangeline, his daughter, “the pride of the village,”—and of his farm, the description of which, with its barns, themselves a village, bursting with hay and its “odoriferous cornlofts,” might well excite the envy of the most contented farmer of Old or New England. To the sycamore-shaded porch of Benedict's house came many a young lover to pay his homage to Evangeline. “But,” we are told, “among all who came, young Gabriel only was welcome.” He was the son of Basil, the blacksmith (the description of whose forge by night, is, by-the-by, a most graphic picture), and had been Evangeline's playfellow from infancy. Their betrothal takes place on the eve of that day upon which the cloud burst over these happy villagers. The whole of this evening scene, both within doors and without, is excellent, full of truthful beauty, with the exception of two lines, justly criticised by Mr Giffillan, though not upon such high ground as we could wish —

Silently, one by one, in the infinite meadows of Heaven,
Blossomed the lovely stars, the *forget me nots* of the angels

We could scarcely believe that these lines, so affected, so meaningless, so degrading, if we may so speak, to both the objects introduced, could have proceeded from the same pen whose simplicity had lately been delighting us. But Mr Longfellow is too apt, in common with some other poets, to introduce the image of angels as mere adjuncts in description, forgetting seemingly, the reality of these great beings, superior to ourselves, and moving on divine messages about us in their awful invisibility. Once realise this truth—and how shocking do such conceits and *prettinesses* appear!

The description of the scene in the church, and of the close of that melancholy day in the village without, contains beauty of a very high order, both poetical and moral. Five days after their imprisonment, the

men were marched under guard to the beach, where the women had brought down their household goods —

There disorder prevailed, and the tumult and stir of embarking,
 Busily plied the freighted boats, and in the confusion
 Wives were torn from their husbands, and mothers, too late, saw their children
 Left on the land, extending their arms with wildest entreaties
 So unto separate ships were Basil and Gabriel carried,
 While, in despair on the shore, Evangeline stood with her father
 Half the task was not done when the sun went down, and the twilight
 Deepened and darkened around—and in haste the refluxing ocean
 Flew away from the shore, and left the line of the sand beach
 Covered with waifs of the tide, with kelp and the slippery seaweed
 Further back, in the midst of the household goods and the waggon, like
 Like to a gipsy camp, or a leaguer after a battle,
 All escape cut off by the sea and the sentinels near them,
 Lay encamped for the night the houseless Acadian farmers
 Back to its nethermost caves retreated the bellowing ocean,
 Dragging adown the beach the rattling pebbles, and leaving
 Inland and far up the shore the stranded boats of the sailors
 Then, as the night descended, the herds returned from their pastures,
 Sweet was the moist still air with the odour of milk from their udders,
 Lying they waited and long at the well known bars of the farmyard,—
 Waited and looked in vain for the voice and the hand of the milkmaids
 Silence reigned in the streets, from the church no Angelus sounded,
 Rose no smoke from the roofs, and gleamed no light from the windows

During this miserable night, Evangeline's father, broken down by his anguish, dies upon the shore. In the morning, the village priest, Father Felician, with some of his flock, bury the old man by the sea —

And as the voice of the priest repeated the service of sorrow,
 Lo, with a mournful sound, like the voice of a vast congregation,
 Solemnly answered the sea, and mingled its roar with the dirges
 'Twas the returning tide, that afar from the waste of the ocean,
 With the first dawn of the day, came heaving and hurrying landward.
 Then recommenced once more the stir and noise of embarking,
 And with the ebb of that tide the ships sailed out of the harbour,
 Leaving behind them the dead on the shore and the village in ruins

With these fine lines ends the first part of "Evangeline," and before proceeding in this pleasant revision, we must note the skill and good taste with which the *machinery* of these events is managed. There was much work to be done, and Mr Longfellow has ably performed it, succinctly, but not hurriedly, with necessary distinctness of detail, but without ever falling into the prosaic. We admire, also, the reserve with which he employs the ample opportunities for expatiating on the pathetic which his subject afforded him. Instead of losing, the pathos gains strength a thousandfold by such reserve. There are no declamations, no appeals to compassion, no lamentations—either on the part of the poet or his personages, he tells his tale in a straightforward way, but with a heart full of the poetical feeling of it,—he needs no other resources but the subject and the feeling, and, in the wisdom of good taste, he has refrained from employing more.

The second part carries us, with the patient and true-hearted Evangeline, through many years and many scenes of disappointment, in search of her lost Gabriel —

Sometimes a murmur, a hearsay, an inarticulate whisper
 Came with its airy hand to point and beckon her forwards,
 Sometimes she spake with those who had seen her beloved and knew him,
 But it was long ago in some far off place or forgotten

At last intelligence reaches some of the Acadian sufferers that a knot of their fellow-exiles are settled in the beautiful country of Louisiana, there is reason to believe Basil of the number—they resolve to join this colony. Evangeline goes with them, full of happy anticipation, and Father Felician, her faithful friend, accompanies her.

We admire much the description of the scenery of the Mississippi. Everywhere, indeed, Mr Longfellow excels in his scenery. Is not, however, the idea of the owl's "demoniac laughter" too harsh and violent for the moonlight picture in which it occurs?

One sultry noon, while the wanderers are sleeping under a willowy isle, a boat approaches, at the helm of which sits a "careworn youth," who, "wary with waiting, unhappy and restless," goes as a trapper to seek in the western wilds "oblivion of self and of sorrow." This boat passes unperceived on the *opposite* side of the island. At such a cruel turn of fate, we felt a strong momentary impulse to put aside the book which drew so painfully upon our feelings, but it is one which, if once begun, cannot be left unfinished. We are, however, inclined to agree with Mr Gilfillan, when he says that "Evangeline's search after her lover becomes at last oppressive and painful."

There is no doubt a very exalted moral in the picture of constancy and patience long tried, long enduring, and only touching their fruition as they leave the shores of this life, yet the moral of this same patience, blest at last by hope fulfilled on earth, while not less beautiful, comes perhaps more home to our natural ideas of Providential justice and beneficence. This is, however, a mere matter of opinion on which we are not sure that we have ourselves decided. And of course, if Mr Longfellow has chosen the austere, and perhaps higher, line, it is matter of praise, not blame, that he should have succeeded in exciting a very painful interest for his meek but strong-hearted sufferers.

On arriving at their journey's end, the exiles find themselves indeed among old friends. Basil, the blacksmith, now a wealthy farmer, is the first to greet them, and promises Evangeline that early the next day they would follow and overtake his son, who had but that morning left him. The evening is spent in mirth and dancing, from which Evangeline steals away into the garden, and looks out upon the prairie, and here we are allowed to gather from her lips one brief but touching outbreak of love and yearning. We wish the passages immediately preceding and following were more worthy of it, but though possessing some poetic beauty, they are much blemished by overstrained expressions, and by conceits concerning fireflies, dews, and flowers. A little further on, we have a more serious objection to make. As Basil and Evangeline are setting forth in quest of Gabriel, Father Felician says to them—

See that you bring back the prodigal son from his fasting and famine,
And, too, the foolish virgin that slept when the bridegroom was coming

To say nothing of the *artistic* error of putting such a speech into the mouth of the good old priest, how could Mr Longfellow belie his own religious mind so far as to make a jesting use of these expressions—the latter especially, from one of the most solemn lessons ever communicated to mankind? As a general rule, every quotation or adaptation of scriptural expression for any but a strictly religious purpose, should be

avoided,* how much more, then, words so sanctified as those in question? And here seems the most fitting occasion to make another remark which presses on us. In the same passage to which we were lately adverting occurs this line —

Over her head the stars, the thoughts of God in the heavens

We are not quite certain of the exact meaning even of this expression, whatever it may be, however, we would fain the expression were not there. Further on we find the following lines —

And over all is the sky, the clear and crystalline heaven,
Like the protecting hand of God inverted above them

This passage, though not so objectionable, because more true and natural, yet partakes of the error of the foregoing one. Holy scripture teems with instances where the beauty and magnificence of nature are employed as types of the divine attributes, but we are not authorised to reverse the simile, and employ the mention of these in order to give strength to a description of nature. Natural objects may be, and are, suggestive of the thought of God, but here that thought is obviously introduced to illustrate the natural object. In a milder form of the same fault, Mr Longfellow compares the setting sun to Moses veiling his face, and the trees struggling with the wind, to Jacob wrestling with the angel.

Basil and Evangeline are disappointed in their anticipation of overtaking Gabriel before he reaches the wilds, and follow his track into the prairies —

Billowy bays of grass ever rolling in shadow and sunshine,
Bright with luxuriant clusters of roses and purple amorphas
Over them wander the buffalo herds and the elk, and the roebuck,
Over them wander the wolves, and herds of riderless horses
Fires that blast and blight, and winds that are weary with travel

Here and there rise groves from the margin of swift-running rivers,
And the grim, taciturn bear, the anchorite monk of the desert,
Climbs down the dark ravine, to dig for roots by the brook side

Into these wilds time does not permit us to follow Evangeline, we may not watch and wait with her in the wigwams of the mission, nor travel with her into the depths of the Michigan forest, where she found the lodge which Gabriel had indeed inhabited, “deserted, and fallen to ruins”

Fair was she, and young, when in hope began the long journey,
Faded was she, and old, when in disappointment it ended

She then took up her abode in Pennsylvania, and here led for many years the life of a Sister of Mercy, visiting the poorest lanes of the city, the garrets of disease and wretchedness. Meanwhile,

Gabriel was not forgotten, within her heart was his image
Clothed in the beauty of love and youth, as when last she beheld him,
Only more beautiful made by his death like silence and absence

How touching—how true to nature is this!

* No one professing to write religiously has transgressed this rule more flagrantly—more profanely, we might add—than Mr Gilfillan in his preface to the book in question, where he tells us that a poet must “come eating and drinking,” and that “he must be touched with a fellow-feeling of our infirmities, and have been tempted in all points as we are.” The kind of half apology which prefaces this sentence only makes the matter worse

At last a pestilence broke out in the city, the hospital was filled, and Evangeline passed her days in a never-wearying labour of love. The end will be guessed. One morning, among the new occupants of the sick beds, she sees stretched the form of an old man with thin grey hair, but in the morning light his features assume for a moment the form of earlier manhood—it is Gabriel, he is dying, but he lives to hear that still cherished voice, to receive her kiss, to die with his head upon her breast, and then she lifts up her submissive thanksgiving for the meeting.

Any quotations from this beautiful and touching close we should deem almost a sacrilege, we have been ashamed even to make this abstract of it. But whatever liberties we may have taken with this, or any other part of the poem, Mr Longfellow must forgive us, for the sake of our sincere admiration of its very great beauty, its tone, and the skill with which a story, by no means easy to manage well, has been conducted. On the whole, we prefer the first part, there is a life, a contrast, a dramatic power in it, of which the necessarily more monotonous character of the second part would not allow. Few writers would have escaped the charge of tediousness, in the description of those wanderings and repeated disappointments, so well as Mr Longfellow has done. In his rhythm, the same marks of carelessness, which sometimes disfigure his lyrics may be frequently detected, especially as regards the caesural pause. Often, it is true, he gives the English hexameter all the harmony of which it is capable, but often again, by a manifest heedlessness, he exaggerates its defects. That many more such pure and beautiful creations of the poet's mind as *Evangeline* may find their way to our shores, we sincerely hope, we shall welcome them with open arms, but we confess the welcome will be one of more unmingled delight should they come to us *not* attired in hexametrical robes.

We have only time to note very briefly the poems which remain. Most of these are translations, more or less good, according to the originals chosen, some of which we should have thought were hardly worth the trouble of the version. A few original poems succeed, of which the most striking is the "Occultation of Orion." "The Bridge" is pleasing, and still more so "Carillon". The poet concludes with a somewhat melancholy lay, entitled "The Curfew," in which he sings—

The book is completed,
And closed like the day,
And the hand that has written it
Lags it away

Dim grow its fancies,
Forgotten they be,
Like coals in the ashes
They darken and die

Song sinks into silence,
The story is told,
The windows are darkened,
The hearthstone is cold
Darker and darker
The black shadows fall,
Sleep and oblivion
Reign over all.

We hope this is only a strain of that would-be pensiveness in which the poets of all ages are occasionally privileged to indulge. That "sleep and oblivion" will *not* reign over Mr Longfellow's works we are well persuaded, and we believe also that, in that healthful and abundant mind, if the memory of the fancies it has lately thrown off "darken and die, like coals in the ashes," it is only to make room for others, whose genial radiance will soon start up to cheer and enlighten alike the minds of the poet and his readers.

THE CONFEDERATES, OR, THE DAYS OF MARGARET OF PARMA

• AN HISTORICAL ROMANCE •

CHAPTER X

THE grey light of morning had scarcely rendered objects visible, when the youth whom we have called Arkel, mounted on a strong black horse, rode forth through the silent streets of Antwerp. The yet chilly atmosphere of a spring night, increased the wretched feeling of desolation which ordinarily creeps over the early traveller who finds himself abroad when nothing is yet stirring—when the busy life of towns has not yet begun, and everything, animate and inanimate, seems wrapped in the same calm, deep repose.

His horse's hoofs re-echoed and vibrated along the streets as if he had been wandering through a deserted city. The very boats, with their tall masts, struggling into form through the dim light, seemed to share the general slumber, so still did the dark masses appear as he cast upon them a careless look while crossing the many bridges that intersected the streets through which he had to pass. The thick vapours were rising from the canals, and the young man, probably under the disagreeable influence of the scene and hour, muffled his face more completely in the collar of his cloak, drew its folds tighter around him, and pressed his barret as deep as its form permitted over his brows.

He looked in vain around to dispel the uncomfortable sensation which crept over him, his eye fell on no living creature, not even of the brute creation. He could discern no familiar object, everything seemed strange, and, at that moment, possessed rather the disadvantages than the charms of novelty. As he rode over the Meerbrugge, however, he looked with something akin to pleasurable feelings on the house in which he had spent a few hours the day before. He expected to see it offer the same image of repose that pervaded everything around him, and mechanically reined in his horse to bestow upon it a parting glance.

To his great surprise, he perceived that one of the shutters was thrown open, and a form, which he thought, so far as the uncertain light permitted him to decide, was that of a female, seemed to be inhaling the damp and keen night-air. As he peered more closely he became convinced that a white handkerchief covered the face of the watcher. Could it be Margaret? or her mother? Whoever it was, what could be her motive for being there at such an hour?

Whilst these thoughts were passing through his mind, he himself became the object of attention to the person he was examining, but instead of continuing her gaze, on perceiving that he had stopped under the casement, she closed the shutter violently, and left him to his conjectures, without any clue by which he might bring them to a solution, and yet a secret conviction, a prescience, such as we so often experience about trifles, and which seldom enlightens us upon things of greater moment, told him that the figure he had seen so indistinctly was no other than the burgher's fair young daughter in tears and in sorrow, who had sought relief from a feverish night in the cool breezes of morning.

The presentiments of Arkel had not deceived him, but, what he little guessed, the tears which Margaret shed that night, the first tribute she had yet paid to sorrow, had been caused by his own mysterious appearance in the house of her father. Having but a very faint and incorrect idea of what had passed between him and her uncle, and of the feelings which had long swayed the latter, she had guessed so much of the truth, that to the stranger's interview with her uncle was due his sudden determination to separate finally from his family—to embark in enterprises the nature of which she scarcely comprehended, but which, perhaps, for that very reason seemed to her the more dark and dangerous.

The disinclination she had conceived towards him was strengthened by overhearing her father declare that he did not much like the looks of the youth, and instead of answering her uncle with his usual alacrity when he was informed by him of the extensive orders that Arkel had brought from the Prince of Orange, he had contented himself with dryly requesting him to take that altogether upon himself, as he was not ambitious of having anything to do with it. She had marked with anxious attention every detail, however minute, of that day, and recalled each and all in turn during the sleepless hours of the night, until every one became indelibly impressed on her remembrance. All the advantages with which the young stranger had appeared to her to be gifted, became at once obliterated from her mind. She saw in him only the cause of her first sorrow—one of those restless spirits who, wandering from roof to roof, carry with them some evil spell wherewith, sooner or later, to destroy the peace of each. His image having been for some hours the theme of her meditations, it is no wonder if no light, however uncertain, could prevent her from identifying his person, nor can it appear strange that, under the impulse of anger, and what she conceived to be just indignation, she would not suffer her eyes to rest upon him even for an instant.

Little did Arkel imagine he left such unfavourable impressions behind him. Young and ardent, he was, after his own manner, pleased with everybody and everything, and it was natural that he should believe he had made a no less agreeable impression upon those with whom it had suited his purpose for a time to associate. In this opinion he was confirmed by remembering the few words he had overheard spoken by Margaret to Chievosa, by which he had been pleased and even flattered. Wholly unconscious of having distressed any earthly being, and perfectly satisfied with the result of his mission, his fancy busied itself with the scenes of the previous day, and with his future prospects, which to his gay imagination seemed to glow with many a bright promise.

Paul had made a strong impression upon him. His firmness of character, straightforwardness of intention, and simplicity of manner, were strongly calculated to strike and to please a generous nature. With a few more such agents, what might not be undertaken and executed? He also dwelt with pleasurable surprise upon the grace and beauty of the young heiress. He never could have divined—unfamiliar as he was with the class to which she belonged—that among its members beings possessed of so much real dignity as Margaret and her uncle could be found.

He pondered with some curiosity upon the probable issue of Chievosa's courtship, and he was no less surprised now than he had been the day before, at the indifference with which that person appeared to be treated

by his young mistress. Could any maiden view with coldness one so gifted in all those external advantages which at all times, and in all ages, have been supposed to charm the female heart? He lost himself in a maze of reflections concerning the Spaniard, whom he felt certain he had somewhere seen before, but with each effort at recollection, his powers of thought became more inextricably entangled, and, with the variableness of youth, all combination of ideas became, at length, lost in a vain endeavour to remember some part of the song, in the performance of which the youth in question had so much distinguished himself. Absorbed in these and other reflections—if, indeed, we may give his thoughts such an appellation—he gained the Kaiserpoort, when, fortunately, recollecting that he had a long ride before him, he cast a farewell look around, pressed the sides of his horse, and soon left a considerable line of route behind him.

Arkel was of a temperament warm and highly enthusiastic, mingled with no slight tinge of the romantic. The secrecy and mystery which must constantly surround the steps of one who pursues the dangerous path upon which he had recklessly entered—the importance with which such a career would invest one whose extreme youth might otherwise, in spite of his high pretensions, cause him to be overlooked—the excitement attending upon such enterprises as would naturally result from his situation—had been chiefly instrumental in drawing him into the party he had embraced. The possible evils which might accrue to himself, or to others, from such a measure, were completely forgotten in the romance of the venture. Urged on by those who easily foresaw that one of his great house and youthful ardour would be of the utmost use in an enterprise of no small delicacy, personal risk, and responsibility, he had undertaken with delight the mission to Antwerp—the first of any importance in which he had been engaged—and he was now rapidly advancing on the road to Bois le Duc, where many of his party were assembled and anxiously awaiting him.

The chill of night soon yielded to the cheerful influence of day, and Arkel watched the first yellow streaks that faintly tinged the horizon, until the pale tint deepened, and, by slow degrees, spread over the skies, whose uniform sheet of dull grey now grew with every instant more light and mellow, until the sun rose in all its splendour. The air became warmer, although the breeze had lost none of its freshness, and the young horseman felt cheered and invigorated as he rode onward with unabated rapidity.

The flat surface of the *Campine*, broken only by waters and dikes, gradually gave way to solid ground of a more agreeable aspect. The low furze, here and there spread over the landscape, became more and more thick, and soon intermingled with brushwood and occasional clusters of trees, whilst the cattle, lying about in picturesque groups, animated the verdant fields. The sun, although the spring was not far advanced, had become sufficiently ardent to render refreshing the sight of the large forest of Grœtenhooft, which he was now fast approaching, and he drew in his rein, as much for the relief of his horse, as to enjoy the fragrance of the young trees exhaling their perfume under its rays.

He rode leisurely for some time along a broad alley of trees, upon which he had entered, lulled by the monotonous twittering of the birds into a dreamy mood, when he was suddenly aroused by gay though dis-

tant sounds, which told his experienced ear that he was about to fall in with the chase, and he had no difficulty in conjecturing of whom the party was likely to be composed. His first movement was to urge forward his heated steed, who, like his master, seemed animated afresh by the music to which he was accustomed, but, recollecting in time that it was his object to avoid, not to court, rencontres, he checked him as suddenly, and although he trusted much to his being unattended, and to his altered costume, which not a little disguised his person, he thought it better to avoid the present meeting, and with it all inquiries which he might, perhaps, have found it somewhat inconvenient to answer.

Being in the more open and frequented part of the forest, and the sounds approaching nearer every minute, with a sigh, he determined upon striking off into one of the apparently endless tracts that extended on either side of the alley. Although, having frequently followed the hounds in that very forest, he was well acquainted with Groetenhoot and its environs, the path he had chosen did not seem familiar to him, it was more wild in its aspect, and less trodden, than any he had yet taken. As he advanced, obliged occasionally to force his way through the tangled brushwood, the sounds of the chase seemed to recede, and gradually die away in the distance. The path, at length, became more open and less encumbered, and he pressed forward with more ease along the straight, clear vista, which now presented itself, until it broke upon a glade whose aspect invited him to pause and breathe his horse.

The soft green turf spread around like a carpet, the tall trees, by which the spot was encircled, interwove their long branches above in the form of a light dome, through whose apertures the blue sky appeared the more calm and azure for being intercepted by its delicate tracery. On almost all sides, except the avenue up which he had ridden, the spaces between the larger trees were filled with thick-growing underwood of various kinds, as if to render this natural bower more secret and lonely.

Scarcely had he time to cast an admiring glance around him, when the cry of the hounds again became distinctly audible, and some of the huntsmen seemed to be at no great distance from him. Obeying his first impulse, he thrust himself as far under the trees as the thickness of the bushes would admit of, hoping, however, at the same time, that by good fortune the huntsmen might pass through some more open avenue in his vicinity. He had not been ensconced in his retreat more than a few minutes, when he became aware, by the peculiar vibration of the earth, that a horse was advancing at full speed along the same alley whence he had emerged, and the next instant the object that had excited his attention came in view.

But, instead of a horseman equipped for the chase, the light form of a lady, mounted on a beautiful jennet, burst upon his sight, and his quick eye soon recognised the fair rider. Her sky blue velvet cap was thrown back off her brow, and the light hair, which, in the agitation of the exercise, had escaped from under it, waved back in graceful though untrained masses from her face. Her well-shaped head was very much raised, and the eagerness of youth and pleasure was visible in her glistening eye, and the unconscious smile that played around her lips. So absorbed was she in the pleasing sensation of the moment, that Arkel hoped, even if she were to ride up to the place where he stood, she might still pass by without bestowing upon him any notice, which seemed the more probable that she

was quite alone and unattended. As she drew nearer, the eyes of the lady wandered with delight over the scene which opened on her view, and, as Arkel had anticipated, partly hidden as he was, he did not immediately attract her attention. The instinct of her palfrey was, however, more easily roused, and his shyness soon made her aware of the vicinity of a stranger. At first, a feeling of timidity seemed to come over her. She was about to turn her horse's head and make a precipitate retreat, when a slight movement of the animal which Arkel bestrode displayed more of his person than was before visible. This appeared to awaken the lady's curiosity, she hesitated for one more instant, then rode up slowly, though still cautiously, towards the place where the young man was stationed. He saw that he was recognised, and deeming concealment to be more than superfluous, he advanced boldly to meet her, addressing her in terms of intimacy and affection.

"You here, Isabel? I little expected the pleasure of seeing you this morning."

"Nay, the surprise is all on my side," said the lady, eyeing her companion's simple and dusty attire with an investigating look, "and, perhaps, the pleasure too," she added, with a smile, "but my presence is easily explained—I am in the train of the princess, who hunts here to-day, Philip and Charles are with us—they'll come up presently, I doubt not."

"But not this way, I hope?" said Arkel.

"I suppose not, it was a mere chance that brought me here—a caprice of Phœbe's," she replied, patting her horse's neck with her delicate hand, "and I yielded, as usual, because he never fails to take me where I should wish to be, had I but as much foresight as himself. What a sweet place this is!"

"Certainly," said Arkel, somewhat abstractedly, "but, Isabel, you must not tell Philip, nor Charles, nor any one else, of our unforeseen meeting. I have grave motives for asking this favour, and you must grant it."

"Well, if you say so, I suppose I must. I see there is something under all this, but later you shall tell me more about it. Hark! there! the dogs warn us—I must on, or I shall lose my chance of the sport. Stand by, Lamoral, and let me go." As the young maiden spoke, a slight degree of impatience seemed to pass over her delicate, almost infantine, features, but Arkel's hand was still on her rein.

"One moment, Isabel, give me but one moment more. You are alone, no help is near—ride not so recklessly, dearest, for the sake of all who love you. Think of the many accidents that might befall you—of the fate of the unhappy Mary of Burgundy, of whose memory you are so fond. Like that princess, you take too much pleasure in the sport."

"You know not, Lamoral, what a keen delight I find in it, or you and others would not be so desirous of debarring me from it. If the princess had not particularly desired my presence, I certainly should not have been here to-day, and yet I never feel so strong a hold on life and health as when borne on by my fleet palfrey beneath the green boughs of the forest. The rapidity of the motion, the freshness of the air, the cheerful sounds of the chase, the ground re-echoing to the horse's hoofs, the barking of the dogs, the gay notes of the horns, the general excitement of the scene,—oh! you know not, Lamoral, how bracing, how invigorating to me is the noble sport! But now pray—pray, Lamoral, let me pass!"

She spoke with an enthusiasm that brought a faint tinge of the rose to mingle with the transparent lilies of her complexion, but it faded almost instantaneously. Arkel withdrew his hand from her rein, and freed from the restraint, she paused but one instant more.

"You are coming soon to Purmerende, I hope," said she, "we are all there." And without awaiting his reply, she urged her jennet forward.

So diminutive was her form, and so peculiar and fairy-like her style of beauty, that it was impossible to gaze on her in that sylvan spot, without thinking of the aerial forms with which legendary lore has so often peopled the lonely glades of the forest. Perhaps the mind of Arkel might be busy with some such fancy, as he looked after her with a thoughtful air until she was lost to view among the trees; he then turned again his attention to the scene around him.

On a closer investigation, he perceived that the spot on which he stood was surrounded by avenues and clearings that had at first escaped his notice, hidden as they were by the intervening underwood. But he soon found that, although he could plainly see into, to enter them was a matter of some difficulty. He was meditating an attempt of this kind, when his movements were arrested by the sight of another horsewoman advancing with frightful velocity along the alley into which he was about to plunge. She was mounted on a coal-black horse of a remarkable breed, urged to his utmost speed; as if borne onward by unseen wings, a noble hound, dark as night, bounded by his side, and it seemed as if, lost in the emulation of speed, these noble animals obeyed no law but the impulse of their own fiery natures. One glance at the lady, whose severe grace of aspect was increased by the dark hunting garb and black velvet bonnet with streaming white plume which she wore, convinced him that she held the reins with a firm though light hand, and her flashing dark eyes and expanded nostrils plainly spoke the eagerness that would gladly have outstripped the winds.

A gigantic oak, with its huge gnarled limbs spreading in every direction, cast its broad shade across the road. The eye of Arkel fell on one branch which a ray of the sun, perchance, gilded more vividly than the rest. It projected right over the course pursued by the huntress. On she came, and now Arkel saw, what had at first escaped him, that it boded danger to the reckless rider. His lips parted to warn—but, all too late, the sound died away in a vague murmur of horror as he beheld the lady hurried forward, with an impetus that nought could check, to meet the shock, the next instant the barret flew from her brow, and she lay apparently lifeless on the ground. The steed staggered and reared, as the rein was involuntarily tightened by its falling rider, but the instant her hand relinquished its hold, and the loosened girths retained the saddle no longer, the frightened animal dashed forward with increased velocity, and was soon lost to view. Not so the faithful hound—all else forgotten, he crouched by the side of his mistress, gazing with melancholy intelligence on her prostrate form.

The whole was but the work of a moment. Arkel had sprung from his horse on first discovering the danger, but as he was preparing to force his way through the bushes, voices were heard calling loudly from various directions, and many cavaliers, decked out in the gayest manner, rode leisurely up the avenue.

One glance at the scene before them changed their carelessness into haste and terror. Arkel, still hidden by his position, kept it rather from

a feeling of torpor, such as comes over the mind of the young and inexperienced at the sight of an unexpected catastrophe, than from any design or desire of further concealment. The dismounted cavaliers soon surrounded the lady, but their consternation and alarm was so great as to prevent their affording any effectual succour.

"Seek her ladies," cried one. "Bring water!" ordered another, in an authoritative manner. "Help! for God's sake help!—the princess is dead!" exclaimed a third. "She has only fainted," assured a fourth. But though all spoke, none moved to obey.

Their useless clamours continued to augment, when suddenly the lady moved, sighed deeply, then opened her eyes. She seemed at first hardly to comprehend what had happened, but gradually consciousness as well as life returned, she rose hastily from her recumbent posture, and waved back, with a haughty gesture, those who would have supported her.

"I thank you, my lords," she said, with as calm and unruffled a dignity as if she had but risen from the couch of easy repose, instead of the moss which had well-nigh proved a bed of death—"I thank you; you mean kindly, but I need no further help. I was merely stunned, I believe, but there is no pain—none whatever. Where is my barret? Ah! there," pointing to the spot where it lay. She took it from the hand of the young noble who proffered it, then continued gazing round. "Where is my horse? Not hurt, I hope?"

"We have not seen him. Doubtless he is fled," said one of the train, "but your highness's accident having now put an end to the day's sport, a litter —"

"Not so! not so!" said the princess, hastily. "I thank you, gentlemen, for the interest you show me, but you push it to extremes. Which of you has a horse that is not fatigued? I will mount him."

Respectful remonstrances were now strongly urged by all who stood around the person of Margaret of Parma. For a time she listened, as if half yielding to their persuasions, but at that moment the horns blew notes of promise, the barking of the approaching dogs announced the game not far off. The ruling passion of the house of Burgundy rose powerfully in her bosom, her calmness gave way, a frown contracted her brow, her eye grew stern, and her voice sounded harsher than usual, with impatience, as she turned to the group around her.

"Which amongst you, I say, has a horse at my disposal? There is no time to be lost, we must mount and away. No more words, pray. I have heard enough. Philip of Egmont, your steed seems fresh there—change the saddle, quick, that's well, your hand."

Young in years, but ripe in the wisdom of courts, whilst the rest hesitated, the young nobleman whom she addressed hastened to prepare, with his own hands, the powerful animal, of Flemish breed, which he had bestridden, for its noble freight, and respectfully helped the princess to horse.

By this time Arkel had sufficiently recovered from the shock his feelings had received on seeing the precarious situation of the princess, and to think of his own. Perceiving she needed no further assistance, and that she was surrounded by familiar faces, he determined to remain where he was until they should have dispersed. As he came to this resolution, something broke through the bushes near him with great violence, he did not see the object, but he felt convinced, by the nature of the bound,

that it was the stag Emerging from another avenue, the dogs, followed by ladies, nobles, and huntsmen, rushed by, and so absorbed were the fair huntresses in the exciting business of the moment, that they heeded not the efforts of the young nobles to attract their attention, but galloped past the place where stood the princess and her party She was now fairly seated, and young Egmont had quitted her stirrup

"Stand back, my lords," said Margaret, grasping the rein tighter "Nay, urge me no farther! Believe me, I am not hurt But now to horse—to horse quickly, and follow " She struck the willing steed, who bounded forward, and the princess soon left her train behind

All prepared to follow as fast as they could A friend offered young Egmont a place behind him until they should fall in with the led horses, and their extreme hurry, and the want of room for the equestrian evolutions in which they indulged, added not a little to the general confusion. They mounted and dismounted, lost and recovered their seats and jewelled bonnets, with shouts of youthful hilarity, strangely contrasting with the dread and alarm that had reigned amongst them but a few minutes before Finally, riding forward, shouting and laughing as they ducked beneath the branch that had nearly proved so fatal to their noble mistress, they pursued the track of the chase

Arkel gazed after them with a dizzy eye, as the last of their dancing plumes disappeared behind the foliage A joyous *morte* was soon blown, but, softened by distance, the well-known air appeared more sweet, the chase had swept by him like the fitting, unsteady forms of a dream, and the dying cadence which he now listened to sounded faint and vague on his ear like music heard in slumber

Leisurely remounting, and leaving the covert in which he had lain *perdu*, he rode slowly on As he approached the place where the princess had fallen, he paused to gaze upon the ancient oak, whose branches had well-nigh proved so deadly

He was about to resume his onward movement, and had turned his horse's head for that purpose, when his eye was attracted by some white object which lay, half-concealed, beneath the long grass and wild flowers of the forest, amongst the straggling roots of the tree A nearer inspection induced him to dismount He advanced to the spot, and raised from the ground a small packet, which he perceived, with much agitation, bore, affixed to it, in yellow wax, the well-known seal of Spain It was evidently a document of considerable importance, for a cramped hand had endorsed the words "secret" and "private," and, in the easily-recognised, bold, spry characters of the princess, had been added the words "most secret—most private" It had, probably, been remitted to her in the hurry of her departure for the chase, when, not choosing to relinquish the day's sport, she had, after hastily perusing it, thrust it into her bosom, having first marked it with precaution, in order that she might not, by any possible error, confuse it with other and more public papers

Arkel's first impulse was to return it into the hands of the owner, from the folds of whose dress it must have fallen He had not, however, ridden many paces with that intention, when apparently some new thought struck him, for, yielding to some sudden impulse, he wheeled round, and, with a countenance sterner than usual, dashed the spurs into his horse's sides, and rode off rapidly in another direction

CHAPTER XI

AT no great distance from Harlem, unprotected by outer walls, lay the little town of Purmerend. It was neatly built, and bore the visible stamp of solid comfort and well-doing. Its grey buildings, and its moated, turreted castle, surrounded by greensward extending far away on every side, appeared like an island rising from the bosom of an emerald sea. The ground, in some parts, exhibited those vivid, beautiful, yet treacherous tints, that might owe their peculiarity to waters concealed beneath its yielding surface, but it was not so with the fair fields of the Beemster. The cattle might there graze in peace, and the traveller traverse with a bold foot its large expanse of soft verdure. Once, indeed, a large lake had spread its silvery waters over what now formed pleasant meadows. Tradition even spoke of a fair syren who, in days of yore, not content with toying with the water-lilies by the light of the moon, and lulling sprites to rest with her song, had even basked in the rays of the sun, and suffered the morning breeze to waft the notes of her enchanted lay to the ears of man. She was caught, the imprudent one, and brought in sad captivity to Harlem, where she lingered many years, and was finally buried. But that was many a long year back. The industry of man had caused the flower to grow where once the wave had broken, and the name of Purmerend alone kept the memory of past things still fresh in the minds of the people.

Fair as ever was syren in olden time, within the grey walls of the castle there dwelt one who, from her peculiar loveliness—combining much of the wild, untutored graces of childhood, from which she seemed scarce to have emerged, with a fawn-like timidity wholly her own—might yet, to a fanciful imagination, have embodied the spirit of the place.

As she half reclined and half sat upon a velvet cushion at the feet of a lady considerably her senior, Isabel of Egmont exhibited nothing of that animation which had been so all-pervading in the forest of Groetenhoot. Her beauty was of no ordinary style, such as would have struck the vulgar eye. A form considerably below the common height, a hily-complexion that knew of no alliance with the rose, the small unmarked features, were all in striking contrast with the beings who surrounded her, to whom a casual observer would not have imagined her to be bound by any ties of blood.

The lady who occasionally gazed upon Isabel with a look such as a mother alone can bestow, was of a noble though severe aspect. Her form was as much above the usual standard of her sex as that of her daughter was beneath it, and her features, far from exhibiting the small delicacy of Isabel's, might have been termed coarse but for her stateliness of mien. She sat upon a solid bench of oak, richly carved, which adhered to the wall all round the apartment, bearing in front, upon lozenge-shaped escutcheons, a series of armorial quarterings belonging to the family of Egmont in right of descent and alliances. Amongst these might be traced the bearings of many of the noblest houses in the Netherlands. The floor—for it was a summer apartment—was of tessellated marble, on which the light that streamed from the windows, at considerable height from the ground, fell mellowed, and, together with an exquisitely carved oaken *Prie-Dieu* of large dimensions, wrought by the most celebrated artists of that day, imparted to the interior somewhat of that cool repose peculiar to chapels.

The ceiling was supported by oaken rafters of great bulk. The huge mantelpiece of carved oak exhibited the armorial bearings of the Egmonts, quartered with those of the house of Bavaria, repeated on the large iron plate at the back of the fireplace, the fire-dogs of which, ornamented with fantastic heads, protruded far into the room.

Near to the Lady Isabel and her mother, Sabina, Duchess of Bavaria, with his arms folded on his broad chest, stood the celebrated Prince of Gavres, popularly called Count of Egmont, at that time a star of the first magnitude, before whose light that of France had so often paled. He was of a fair, florid complexion, his expanded brow looked the seat of honour, his mild blue eyes were full of gentleness, and his full lips expressed the blandest courtesy. His air was that of command, a frank, easy grace was shown in every movement. No person ever united in a more perfect manner the prince, the knight, and the soldier.

Either from the love of contrast, so deeply implanted in human nature, or because she was the eldest of his daughters, the count regarded Isabel as his favourite child. He felt for her the strongest affection of which the heart of man is susceptible. Not his sons, who might bear his banner to the battle-field, continue the name he had endowed with so much lustre, and, like him, trumpet it forth to the annals of history—not even Philip, his first-born—was half so dear to his heart as that one little shrinking floweret, whose fragility made it doubtful if it could bloom long in a world where there are so many cold winters to blight, so many scorching summers to wither. He regarded her with attention, and Isabel, happy in the notice of a parent whom she loved with all the enthusiasm of her nature, remained motionless, with the long, snowy fingers of her mother clasped within her own, fearing lest, by movement, word or look, she might disturb his gaze, thus fixed upon her.

"I rejoice to find ourselves once more at Purmerend," said the countess to her husband. "So far from the business and the cares of public life, I feel completely at home. Here, at least, we have you to ourselves. At Gavres, the affairs of Ghent tear you constantly from our side. How much happier should we be if, retired altogether from the state, forgetting and forgotten, you could at last enjoy the pleasures, the leisure—and, let me add, the security—of your home."

"Idle visions these, Sabina," replied the count, "such as women love to indulge in. Forgotten I never shall be, or my country will be stained with ingratitude, forget, I never can! I am, moreover, looked upon by all classes, in these critical times, as one of their chief stays in the storm. I have duties to fulfil—duties from which I never could, nor would, shrink, let them cost me what they may."

"Alas! I fear the cost will be great. Already have you been far more involved in these matters than is favourable to our repose."

"Repose is not a word for a man, Sabina. You would not wish your husband to entwine his brows with a wreath of poppy."

"Your laurels are yet too fresh to need replacing," said the countess, proudly.

"Perhaps a few olive-branches interspersed amongst their leaves would not have disparaged them," said the count, thoughtfully. "That would have been the proudest hour of my life, in which I could have stood between my sovereign and my countrymen a successful mediator, obtaining justice as a boon from the former, and offering in return from the

latter the assurance of infinite gratitude and unalterable fidelity Such, Sabina, is the dream my fancy has long revelled in, and from which I have been but too roughly awakened "

"It was indeed worthy of you, had but success been possible ' I would fain hope that both the king and your countrymen—cruelly as the former has deceived you—must honour the disinterested feelings that have guided you to seek the good of both But, alas ' people, as well as princes, have often proved ungrateful, and in that, at least, have shown sympathy The task of mediator has ever been a difficult—sometimes a dangerous one He risks offending the one party, frequently, without satisfying the other "

"But the satisfaction of one's own conscience—do you reckon that as nothing, Sabina? Mine to me is, and, I trust, ever will be, the highest of earthly tribunals "

"Excuse my frankness, said the countess, gently "Remember how slowly, how sorrowfully, the year you were in Spain glided by with those you left behind Little Isabel pined and drooped, as if she never were to see you more "

The count sighed, and remained for some minutes absorbed in thought Apparently, his daughter was the object of his reflections, for he passed his hand over her fair hair, and affectionately kissed her forehead

"I had encouraged hopes for you, too, my child, he said "But promises ' what are they? The word of a king is very air, it fans our cheek, passes by, and is lost in the atmosphere of a court ' Even so be it, my Isabel and I can do without royal favours "

"Still something, nay, much, was done for us,' said the countess, "and with some management the hopes held out to you may, perhaps, yet be realised "

"Yes, at the price of my honour " exclaimed Egmont, impatiently "I was grateful for those private favours you mention—how grateful, you best know, Sabina—when I fancied that Philip was as much my country's benefactor as my own The world calls me rich, but what riches are adequate to support with due splendour a name like ours, that has so many claims upon it God knows, I grudge not Heaven any child of mine whom a true vocation may call to embrace the veil, still, I confess, I should not like to see any one of them compelled to that measure, and the promises of Philip were not unimportant in that respect But all that is now over," added he, with a sigh "The prince who did not scruple to expose my fair fame to foul suspicions—who could persuade me that I had succeeded in obtaining from him all I demanded for a distressed people—give me letters of a satisfactory nature, which he took care to neutralise by private, and very different instructions, and thus expose me to the doubts of all parties—can I trust him in aught—him who could thus deceive one to whom the world thinks him indebted? It was not fair—it was not knightly "

"I wish," said the countess, "you would resent this conduct by silent contempt, instead of open discontent The latter merely tends to embitter the many joys that fate has bestowed on you, and may, ultimately, cause the king to regard you as an enemy All hearts are not generous enough to understand that fidelity may be still strong in a bosom whence love and respect are flown Oh ' my dear, dear husband, how I wish to see you renounce the part you have embraced, and retire into the bosom

of your family, where, I repeat, you will find safety as well as happiness!"

"It is worse than useless, dearest, to speak thus to me," said the count, taking his wife's disengaged hand. "You are conjuring up sweet images of peace that may not be. They would not let me retire thus to tranquil oblivion, and, although in hours of disappointment I have myself thought of it, I could, I think, have courage for anything but that. Think not, Sabina, that it is because I feel less warmly than yourself the pleasures—the inexhaustible delights of a home like mine, where bright hopes and brighter smiles meet me at every turn. Not even at Spire, in the halo of your youth and beauty, when an emperor put your hand in mine, were you half so dear to my heart as now, my Sabina—now that you have added thirteen golden links to the chain that bound us. Indeed I am a happy husband—a glad father, and to watch my children's growing merits—to listen to my Sabina's gentle counsel—to watch over the comforts and prosperity of my vassals (for though my power of inflicting pain on them be limited by the wise laws of this country, still my bounty is not fettered), to enjoy their grateful obedience and their love—to see my halls filled with the friends and allies of my house, and to pass the wine-cup round in oblivion of the discord and the evils that make the world, at times, so sad—to break a lance in the tilt-yard, or pursue the fleet stag through the green forest with the fleetest hounds—to see my gentle daughters wed noble and aspiring youths, my sons gather laurels in their turn wherewith to crown the shield of their house and quarter it with high alliances,—these are visions that have often haunted my day-dreams, and made me smile away many a graver, sadder image. Such the life I could have wished to live. My death I would meet with delight in the hour of victory, a soldier's grave is the soldier's best recompense: not for him the soft cushions of a silken bed, and the wails of female sorrow, let his last couch be the trampled turf, and the shouts of triumph his death-knell! But if that may not be, as it seems now but little likely that it should, then would I pass from this world like my cousin of Buren,* with a smile on my lip, surrounded by loving friends and numerous kinsmen, having time to express the kind wishes of my heart to each and all. His was a calm, serene death—such as it well beseems a man to die. Shall my end be like his?"

A pensive, almost sad expression banished from the count's handsome countenance the glow and animation which his words had excited, as if some painful train of thought had been suggested by them. The warm pressure of Sabina's fingers, and the soft lips of Isabel, that touched his other hand, aroused him. He gazed in their tearful eyes, and

* The death of the Count of Buren is quite a feature of the middle ages. When he felt his last hour approaching, he armed himself, *cap à-pie*, and throwing over all the gorgeous mantle of the Golden Fleece, caused himself to be carried to his grand hall of reception, whither he had summoned most of his powerful kin, as well as all the officers of his household and retainers, down to the huntsmen and falconers. Having taken his seat, he called for a large goblet of wine, and quaffed it to the health of all. He then conversed freely, indulging in reminiscences of the chase and war, until, feeling himself growing weak, he blessed the emperor, took leave of each in turn, even of his servants, and, falling back in his chair, expired. Thus says Brantome: "should all great men meet their end, instead of dying in feathers, like ducks." This death made a great sensation at the time, and to "die like Buren" became a common saying.

shaking off, with an evident start, the despondency that crept over him, he continued, with a somewhat forced smile—

"But talking of such matters will not make the few hours pass lightly which we have snatched from the world? Where are your brothers, Isabel? They both accompanied you back, did they not?"

"Yes," replied Isabel "Philip was delighted with the princess's affability, and, in truth, she was full of kindness for us all To me she spoke at great length of the advantages of a religious life, and plainly hinted that, should I wish to enter a convent, I need not be anxious about a dowry, for the king would provide one fitting my birth "

"And a great deal more to the same purpose, I dare be sworn," interrupted the count, angrily "I wish she would spare me such marks of her favour as her endeavours to rob me of my eldest daughter Come, Isabel, you must not think of this, I have very different views for you You are not the child," he continued, with a smile, "that I could so easily spare I owe the duchess no thanks for this But your mind must remain unbiassed for the present, in time, I will stamp upon it the impress I wish it to bear—always with your leave and consent, fair daughter, for God knows I would not enact the tyrant with any human being, least of all with my own children "

"I am glad," said the countess, "that you are so explicit with Isabel She has taken strange notions into her head of late, and thinks more of the cloister than we could wish She does not reflect that her parents may have happier plans in store for her "

"My little Isabel," said Egmont, coaxingly, "has more regard for our wishes than you imagine, Sabina These longings after repose and seclusion are often, in a young breast, mistaken impulses of a very different nature Isabel loves me too well ever to have thought seriously of leaving me "

The count spoke in the most soothing of tones, yet the deepest blushes rapidly succeeded each other on the young girl's cheek, her frame was agitated by a slight tremor, and two silent tears escaped from beneath her long, silken lashes In any other, these symptoms would have appeared strange, but the parents of Isabel had long observed, and watched with painful anxiety, the extreme timidity and nervousness of their favourite child Unlike the rest of their offspring, she had never possessed the vigour of frame and buoyancy of disposition which had fallen to their lot, and no after-cares had been successful in giving body or mind more tone The calm, unruffled existence which her rank secured for her had not blunted or spared, as might have been hoped, but rather increased, to a painful excess, the young maiden's acute sensibilities Her family had at first struggled with, but now respected, the weakness of her physical organisation Involuntarily, her father's voice became more gentle when addressing her, her mother's look softer, and her infant sisters forebore their loud gambols in her presence A natural instinct banished all rude and boisterous mirth from around her On the present occasion, therefore, her apparently causeless agitation was neither canvassed nor reproved, and the entrance of two lovely cherubs, ushered in with great ceremony, by the countess's page, diverted attention from her

They rushed to the count for the accustomed embrace, who, raising from the floor each little damsel in turn bestowed upon her the parental kiss with a look of glowing fondness The eyes of the children were in-

stantly attracted by the gay colour of the silken band to which the insignia of the Golden Fleece was appended, and they struggled with their tiny hands for the prize as they lay in their father's arms

"You are too ambitious, fair damsels," said he, laughing, "but though we are spared the weight of the collar on ordinary days, yet the trinket is heavy enough at times in all conscience, without your adding your little load to it. It is remarkable how all my girls in turn have striven to pull this honourable badge from my neck. Little Isabel was never so happy as when I suffered her to play with it."

"You spoil the children," said the countess, with a smile of happiness. "See how they toy with your ruff. They will tear the pearls from your doublet, if you do not put them down. Leonora is particularly mischievous."

"When one has not yet completed the second year of existence," said the count, laughing at his crowing babes, "one cannot be expected to be discreet or reasonable, but, in good sooth, they are troublesome little blessings. Here, Sabina, take them."

The mother received her treasures in her lap, where the youngest seemed to rest in perfect content, but the elder glided to the floor, and was soon playing with Isabel, the general favourite of the family, whether old or young.

"We must plan something to amuse," began the count, but the sentence died away upon his lips as the door opened, and a personage glided into the apartment, whom we cannot pass under silence.

The Count of Egmont, like all the other members of the privy council, had a confidential secretary, who was privileged to accompany his patron to the council chamber, and who, like all the chief officers of powerful houses, was of good birth. Far from being obliged from pecuniary motives to take upon himself the duties of such an office, John of Casembrot, Lord of Backerseel, was not, as his title sufficiently denotes, without landed property, but, sharing in no ordinary degree the enthusiastic love and admiration of the Flemings for the count, he felt honoured in filling a situation of so much trust about his person. He had been with him so many years that Egmont had no secrets for him, his very thoughts, his most important plans, were laid open to him as soon as formed—in short, he had become his friend.

Casembrot was evidently past thirty, of a grave appearance, but otherwise so little distinguished by any remarkable trait or characteristic, that he might have been seen day after day without being noticed, or, on a sudden, called to remembrance at all, but the scrutiny of an interested observer would have discovered that his tall form was prematurely bent, and that his thin, prominent features bore an expression of habitual melancholy, which could not have been always familiar to them. His complexion, hair, and eyes, were dark, like those of a Spaniard, but there was a mildness pervading his every look, that at once showed he belonged not to that land, whose sun but too often ripens unto fierceness the passions of man.

Casembrot looked round for a moment with an air of uncertainty. When his eye encountered that of the count, he said—

"I am sorry to have to derange you from the enjoyment of this tranquil hour, but news of a pressing nature has arrived, which, I am afraid, will demand your instant attention."

"It is always you, Casembrot, who take my lord from us," said the countess, reproachfully

"Not me, lady," replied the secretary, "not me, but the government of Flanders has many claims upon his time which he cannot escape"

"But to-day," said Egmont, looking around him with looks of tenderness and satisfaction, "to-day, I feel quite the father, and would fain forget that I am aught else—that is, if you will let me," and he placed his hand familiarly on his secretary's shoulder

Casembrot met the glance of the count with a look of so grave a meaning, that the latter instantly relinquished his hold

"I see how it is," said he, "you will take no excuse, and are again come to pour into my ear all the bad news that has been collecting during my short absence"

"But you will come back to us," said the countess, gazing on her husband with a look of deep affection

"Certainly, I will give him an hour at the utmost, and then, if no envious chance tears any of us away from the domestic circle, we will have one fortnight free from all interruption"

"I fear you will think it advisable, on the contrary, to hurry back, with all speed, to Brussels," said Casembrot

"In that case, you have truly some unpleasant tidings for me," said the count, assuming an air of seriousness he had not yet exhibited "Then, dearest, you must partake of the delights of Furmerend without me"

As Egmont was about to leave the apartment, the galloping of a horse was heard approaching the gates of the castle

"Ha!" exclaimed Casembrot, who had listened attentively, "doubtless the regent's messenger comes to summon you in all haste to the council"

"Indeed! blows the wind from that quarter?" answered the count, negligently "Then, for once, I intend to disappoint *Madame de Parme* Of what use are we Knights of the Golden Fleece and Governors of Provinces in the council, when the princess has previously settled in her own cabinet, with Barlaumont and Viglius, the measures which she is determined to take Once it was Granvella, now it is them There is always some one between her and those whose voices should be most listened to Wherefore should I go to offer advice that will, I am sure, be rejected, because unpalatable? and why should I not refuse to act upon principles which my common-sense, and my heart, alike disown? Come, my trusty friend, for once believe me, though I know you are, in most cases, unpersuadable when once you have adopted an idea I feel that in attending this summons I can do no good to others, perhaps none to myself I have something of a presentiment about it I will not go"

"But bethink you, my lord," urged the secretary "Not only the princess, but also the Knights of the Order, will, perhaps, put the most unfavourable construction on your absence at such a crisis Had I but time to explain——"

"You, doubtless, would persuade me, in your own quiet way, as usual, that I am wrong and you are right But this time I will be firm The countess and Lady Isabel shall not be disappointed Besides, I have a misgiving—a secret voice tells me to stay away"

At this moment the messenger was formally announced, and Casembrot hastened to receive him in the hall below

"Nay, trust not, implicitly, to omens and forebodings," said the countess. "Remember how you imagined evils were impending, in consequence of some trivial circumstances that occurred at the memorable *fêtes* at Antwerp, many years ago, yet nothing happened that was not most agreeable."

"True," replied the count, "I remember it well. The king overthrew De Horn and myself in the tournament, and we both imagined it boded us no good. I tormented myself with apprehensions on your account, and yet that very day I learnt the glad tidings of my Isabel's birth."

"And the ring—the talisman of your house, whose loss so much distressed you, but which was eventually returned. Omens are not to be trusted, they so often prove false. It is the weakness of our nature, only, that prompts us to listen to the busy suggestions of our fancy."

"It were dangerous, at least, not to struggle with them at times," said Casembrot, who at that moment glided into the room. "This is a truth that all must have experienced who have passed the first days of youth."

"For once, however, I am determined to yield to them," persisted the count. "What have you heard more? Alas! the frail bark of the state is sadly tossed about, when a female hand is at the rudder."

"Let us be fair," answered Casembrot. "Few men could steer it clearer of the rocks than does the Princess Margaret. If she were but free to act according to the impulses of her own firm mind, and clear head, it were well for the Netherlands."

"If you think so highly of her powers," said the count, "you will agree the more readily with me, that she stands not in much need of my support."

"The messenger has informed me," observed the secretary, "that others have been sent to every quarter of Flanders, to summon the knights and governors to Brussels in all haste. I also gathered from him that his instructions were to hasten here, before going to the Prince of Orange. It were, perhaps, well for you, my lord, to ride as far as Breda, and consult with him. As we proceed thither I can lay the urgency of the case before you, and I feel certain, too, that the prince will advise a speedy compliance with the regent's wishes. I hope no knight, under the present circumstances, will, I am sure none should, refuse obedience. Believe me, my dear lord, your departure is unavoidable."

"You see, ladies, I cannot escape my fate, let me struggle never so much," said the count, laughing, "so farewell, farewell! Casembrot, I am yours."

As Egmont, followed by his secretary, left the apartment, again the sound of a horse was heard entering the court-yard.

"Lamoral!" exclaimed Isabel, her eye flashing with a momentary pleasure as the door flew open, and Arkel stood in the presence of the ladies of the castle.

PORT PHILLIP

BY FREDERICK POWLETT, ESQ

WHILE the subject of emigration is being so prominently brought before the public, it may not be amiss to draw especial attention to that one of the Australian colonies which, while it seems to be free from most of the drawbacks urged against the fifth division of the globe, combines within itself nearly all its peculiar advantages. We allude to Australia Felix, commonly known by the name first given to the harbour—Port Phillip. This is certainly one of the most extraordinary colonies of this or any former age. Discovered—or, at any rate, explored and settled—by voluntary private enterprise, it has never cost the mother country one farthing. On the contrary, having from the commencement a large (considering the population) surplus revenue, it contributed to the resources of New South Wales, or Sydney, of which (much against its will) it still forms a part—an evil from which Port Phillip seems about to be freed, by being made a distinct colony, with its own governor and legislature, which is likely to be chiefly elective. Scarcely more than ten years ago this colony was located by some enterprising settlers from Van Diemen's Land, who brought their flocks with them, at great risk and expense. This was followed shortly after by the arrival of flocks and herds of cattle from the northern district, and now the whole country between Melbourne and Yap is occupied, and a mail runs twice a week from Melbourne to Sydney, a distance of about six hundred miles. In 1837, the first time we saw the now handsome city of Melbourne, the capital, the first brick house was unfinished, there were, perhaps, three hundred people living in tents, slab or weather-board cottages, or mud edifices, commonly called wattle and daub. After dark, the only guide to the residence of an acquaintance was the bearing of the lights in the different houses, and the position of the one sought being ascertained, ten chances to one against your arriving without falling into some pit lately dug for the cellar of a house about to be erected, or your shins being broken by stumps of trees, which were by no means scarce in what were called the streets of that young settlement.

This town has now about twelve thousand inhabitants, and many of its buildings would vie with the best in many towns of similar size in England. The population of the whole district may be estimated at forty thousand, as the last census, taken in 1845, was about thirty-six thousand. With respect to the character of the population, we feel warranted in saying that it is equal, if not superior, in point of education and intelligence, to any colony under the British crown. We refer especially to the settlers in the interior. Its wealth is best proved by the amount of its exports and imports, the former amounting to nearly 500,000*l.*, and the latter to about 250,000*l.*

Its freedom from the severe droughts which the more northern settlements are occasionally subject to, and its general temperature, make it peculiarly adapted to the constitution of those born in our own isles, and even those who are delicate, and have a tendency to pulmonary disease, derive benefit from its genial atmosphere.

It possesses, perhaps, a larger portion of soil adapted to agriculture than

any other part of the continent of New South Wales, while for grazing purposes it is perhaps unrivalled. In the luxuriant districts of Port Fairy and Portland Bay it is not unusual for a settler to send to market a draft of fat cattle, say 100, from his run, grass-fed (no oil-cake or beet-root), averaging 900 and even 1000 lbs in weight, and these splendid beasts are often melted into tallow, owing to a want of sufficient mouths to consume the beef, even at $1\frac{1}{4}$ d per lb.

While the most serious complaints are urged against Australia as to its want of water, Port Phillip seems to have engrossed more than its share of the rivers on the south-eastern and southern coast, Giff's Land, on the south-east coast alone, has seven streams, including the fine River La Trobe (named by Count Strabysky after the superintendent of the district), constantly running through one of the finest tracts of country in the world, and Port Phillip Proper possesses the great River Murray, more than 800 miles in length, the Goulburn, Yarra Yarra, Wamby, Mowabutt, Lee, Wannon, Wimmera, Glenelg, Broken River, Ovens, Camparpe, Loddon, and many others, too numerous to mention, besides water-holes, chiefly from drainage, on many of the large plains in the interior, that render large tracts of country available which would otherwise be useless.

Port Phillip possesses another advantage, which to many will appear a primary one, its freedom from the convict taint, for though it forms part of the territory under the governor of New South Wales, convicts have never been sent to this highly-favoured district, and so few have been brought over from Sydney, that they are lost as a class among the numerous free immigrants from the mother country. To such as dread the contaminating influence of a convict atmosphere, whether on account of themselves, or, if married there, or intending to become so, their children, Port Phillip presents a society perhaps as pure as that to which they are surrounded in this country.

The aborigines may number about 5000, and though no great success has attended the attempts made to civilise them, they can scarcely be said to be any hindrance, or interfere with any settler who acts with common prudence and in a judicious manner towards them. The aboriginal protectors have certainly been of much use in preventing collisions, and the native police, amounting to about eighty men, are in a good state of discipline, and very useful in assisting the other police in arresting the violators of the law, and, if necessary, are only too ready to be employed against those of their own race.

One late benefit that Port Phillip has received, should add no small weight with many who may be thinking of giving up the hard struggle in this crowded country, and seeking their fortunes in a distant land, equally formed by the Almighty, though still, with few exceptions, in a state of nature, and that is the recent appointment of a bishop, eminent for piety, learning, and benevolence. With such a man at the head of the English Church, who has given up the comforts of this highly civilised kingdom, and gone out with no other motive than to preach the Gospel of Christ and to be of use to his fellow-creatures in a far country, we think it promises well for the religious and moral well-being of the community placed under his spiritual guidance.

JACOB VAN DER NEESS

A ROMANCE

BY MADAME PAALZOV

CHAPTER XIX

THIS produced a spontaneous effect Van der Néess started back, and shuddered, as if he had been shot, ran towards the chair from which he had risen, sank down upon it utterly exhausted, and bathed in perspiration, and then looked up fearfully from beneath his bushy eyebrows For the moment he seemed scarcely able to collect his senses, but soon recognised Mynherr van Marseeven and the sheriff, who stood before him with a threatening aspect.

"I hope you are conscious that you have behaved like a fool," said the sheriff, "and like an unmannerly clown, that you have been guilty of an unpardonable breach of respect towards the high and noble person of the chief burgomaster, and deserve to be turned out of doors by the constable, if we had but one here, since you have proved yourself utterly unworthy of the condescension and kindness his mightiness has shown in crossing the threshold of such a maniac "

"Indeed, your worship," said he, "I confess I was wrong, but surely his mightiness will be merciful, and forgive a poor man for forgetting himself in his grief, but——"

"Silence!" thundered Hooft "You had no grief, but you received undeserved honours You have behaved like a madman But now, without any further palaver, declare to us whether, as the father of this young girl who is to be elevated to the rank of countess, you have any objections to make to the Countess Fawcett's project If you have not, sign and seal this document, that we may have done with you."

"I have no earthly objection to the matter of her being made a countess, or bearing a noble name," said Neess "But, Mynherr Hooft, you must be sensible that a man cannot sign a document without knowing what it contains Now, consider"—(here his courage seemed to rise)—"for anything I know it may impose some weighty obligation on me What would have become of me if I had not learnt to guard against such——"

"Silence!" ejaculated Hooft once more, for he was determined to keep Van der Neess in salutary fear "Silence, I say! There, take the document, read it, and then do what you like, for it is stated therein that your consent is freely and voluntarily given "

"You may say that, when you've got it," muttered Van der Neess between his teeth, as he proceeded to read the document

The two gentlemen approached a window, and exchanged some whispered remarks concerning this strange scene They scarcely knew how they felt, for, with all their anger, they could hardly resist bursting into a fit of laughter, but they agreed they had never before met with so despicable a specimen of human nature as Van der Neess

The latter had, in the meanwhile, perused the document, and, when he found it contained no demands on his gold, he set about reading it over a

second time, to make sure he was not mistaken. When he found the contents to be the same, he grew thoughtful, and his suspicions became more firmly rooted, for he imagined there must be some hidden meaning, which he could not discover, or that this paper must entail dangerous consequences, so that, by signing what seemed a harmless document, he would in some way or other commit himself, and afterwards discover that, as he had said A, he must say B.

"Well," said Hooft, who had entreated Mynherr van Marseeven not to address this rude fellow again, "well, have you done now? I should have thought that, after reading over that paper twice, you might know its contents."

Van der Néess started in alarm. Much disturbed at having found nothing to confirm his suspicions, he said, in a dejected tone, as the parchment dropped from his hands, "I can discover nothing."

"Except undeserved kindness," said Hooft, scarcely able to suppress a smile, as he perceived how Van der Néess had unconsciously betrayed himself. "Therefore do not detain us any longer."

"You are very hasty, Mynherr Sheriff," said Van der Néess, in evident anxiety, "you give me no time to reflect."

"Nor is there any occasion for that," cried Hooft. "All that is required of you is, that you do not object to your daughter's change of name and elevation to rank."

"By no means," returned Néess, "I have not a word to say. And if you will assure me, upon your honour as a sheriff, that nothing more is required of me but to give my consent to that, I will sign the paper at once."

Hooft stamped on the ground with impatience, but a conciliatory sign from Mynherr van Marseeven induced him to yield.

"Well, then, in Heaven's name!" cried he, angrily.

"Upon my honour, as a sheriff, nothing more is required of you!"

Van der Néess signed the document, but muttered to himself, "So this proud aunt wants nothing of me—the haughty baggage! I suppose she will go borrowing and begging all over the world before she comes to me!" He was much disappointed at losing his expected triumph, and the satisfaction of refusing her request in a rude and insulting manner, as well as provoked at having missed the opportunity of surprising Angela by his just conclusions.

When he had signed his name, Hooft took the paper in his hand, and said in a tone between anger and mockery—

"Now your daughter is a countess—that is to say, provided her mother also consents to sign, for it is only then you will receive the emperor's letters patent, empowering your daughter to bear the arms and name."

"Oh! I'm sure of my wife," said Néess, his heart swelling with joy. "This will, indeed, be a surprise for her, she little thinks of her daughter's coming to such honour, she will find out now that a merchant of Amsterdam is no hindrance to high honours, and that it is worth something for a girl to be his daughter! Will you allow me to run to her? She is in the court with her lady aunt. I am anxious to know how she will look when she hears she has given birth to a countess!"

"Save yourself the trouble," said Hooft. "We shall presently repair thither together and the countess, her aunt, will by this time have acquainted her with the whole affair."

"The devil take her!" cried Van der Néess, fiercely, "she is always in the way, and bent upon spoiling all my sport! Well, be that as it may, I shall yet read upon my wife's face the impression this news has made upon her."

Cornelius Hooft was obliged to push him back, in order to allow the burgomaster to pass out first, and the party entered the court of pleasure.

The agitating scene which had taken place here, in consequence of the very different light in which the affair was viewed by Angela, had given place to a peaceful calm, and the two noble-minded relatives were engaged in a serious and affectionate conversation on subjects of the most exalted and interesting nature.

Angela gravely and respectfully saluted the burgomaster and his companion, and Urica shuddered as she felt she could no longer avoid noticing Van der Néess.

A glance sufficed to convince her that he was, if possible, more repulsive in his appearance than ever, for after a scene, such as we have just described, the traces of passion were ever written on his countenance, which was also distorted by convulsive twitches.

Meantime, all his boasted assurance had vanished when he found himself in Urica's presence, who had not lost anything either in beauty or in dignity since he had last seen her.

At length, turning round towards him, she said, in as friendly a tone as she could command, though she visibly changed colour—

"Good evening, Mynherr Néess, come nearer, if you please, for we have an important affair to discuss—probably you have already been informed of it by my cousin, Mynherr van Marseeven?"

"Not a bit of it!" cried Van der Néess, as he dragged his feet along the ground in drawing near. "It is all settled, there is nothing to consult about, noble aunt, the little countess is at your service, and trust me to give her something solid to balance the title." He accompanied these words with a repulsive grin, and when Urica, unable to conquer her disgust, turned away, his eye wandered to Angela. When he saw the serious expression of her pale features, he imagined she must, as yet, be ignorant of the good fortune that had befallen her daughter, and nudging Urica, who started back in alarm, he said, in a confidential tone, "I suppose she knows nothing as yet?"

"She knows all!" said Urica, drawing back.

Van der Néess hereupon imagined Angela did not comprehend the matter, and deemed it incumbent on him to explain it to her in a manner suited to her understanding, therefore, pushing himself past the rest of the party, he caught hold of her arm, and said, in an altered tone of voice—

"I suppose you did not understand what your noble aunt told you, about the new little countess, or that you are mother to a countess? Do you hear me—our dear little Floris is a countess—do you understand? She is really and truly a countess—as certainly a countess as ever your aunt was."

"Oh, Néess," faltered Angela, looking up, sadly. "Our own little Floris! Is it possible you could consent to that?"

"You little simpleton!" said Van der Néess, attempting to play the indulgent husband, "you cannot yet conceive the extent of your good

luck, that is the reason you ask such questions! Just think! you are really mother to a countess. Eh! is not that something to please your pride? Ah! I know you are only pretending, I warrant your little heart is fluttering all the while? Well, well, you must not expect too much from her," said Van der Neess, turning confidentially towards Hooft. "She is not naturally gifted with so much penetration as to be able to understand all these things—it is no fault of hers, and, after all, what do women want of so much judgment? It is our department to think and judge of what should be done, and at the end they always see that we are right, and rejoice that we have settled the point for them. Look here, my little Angela, all you have to do is to put your name to a paper which Mynherr Hooft will place before you—close under my name which I have already affixed to it."

Angela turned from him without replying, and, folding her hands, sadly, she said—

"May God be merciful to me, and support me!"

"Let us sit down," said the chief burgomaster, taking a seat beside Urica, and motioning the sheriff to a seat near Angela.

"My noble cousin," said the Countess Lawcett, turning to the chief burgomaster, "my niece has refused her consent to the elevation of her daughter to the rank of countess, and the reasons she has assigned for her refusal are so just and noble, that my opposition has been silenced."

"How!" cried Van der Neess, starting up. "Have you refused your consent when I have signed?"

"Neess," said the burgomaster, in an authoritative tone, "I desire you will be silent till you are spoken to, and offer no interruption to anything your wife may say or we reply, otherwise we all shall instantly leave your house, and hold our consultation elsewhere."

This tone, as usual, made Van der Neess tremble, but he sought to disguise his fears beneath an air of stubborn indifference.

"Well," cried he, settling himself in his chair, "I can easily be silent, if that's all, but you won't do much with her, I'll tell you that, for she can't understand such things without me. But I shall be silent. Ho! ho! that won't cost me much."

When silence was at length fairly established, Angela began to explain her reasons, at first she spoke tamely, and her voice faltered, but she gained courage as she went on, and repeated nearly all she had said to Urica, though she attempted to soften it down out of consideration for Van der Neess. During this speech, the latter, though debarred from speaking, could not forbear expressing his feelings in dumb show. He beat the devil's tattoo, rocked himself backwards and forwards in his chair, shrugged his shoulders, looked from one to the other with a savage grin, clenched his fist, and shot forth fiery glances.

Both the chief burgomaster and Mynherr Cornelius Hooft were much affected and surprised by what they heard, for though they had always felt interest and pity for Angela, they had listened somewhat incredulously to Madame Marseeven's account of the development of her mind, and attributed the favourable opinion she expressed of Angela to the well-known kindness of her gentle nature, for men often hesitate longer than they ought to believe in the mental cultivation of a woman who has no other instructor than her own pious heart.

When they had heard Angela's arguments, they were inclined to think

she had taken a more correct and unbiassed view of human life than they themselves Cornelius Hooft, that devoted admirer of the female sex, listened to her words with eyes glistening with emotion, and even Van Marseveen could not suppress an approving nod

Encouraged by these signs of approbation Angela proceeded as follows

"I have been informed by my noble-minded aunt, whose kind intentions towards my child I truly appreciate, that a decree passed in such high places as the States-General and the Imperial Court is irrevocable, and my maternal interference can merely prevent the consequences, therefore, my dear friends, and you, my beloved aunt, I entreat you to take charge of this important document, and keep it for my little Floris I will sign it, as my husband has already done, that it may be perfectly valid But it is my wish that the matter may rest there, and nothing be suffered to transpire, either in the city or in the house, or in particular to my little Floris herself, and I pray you, of your kindness, to assist me in effecting this One or other of us, I trust, will live," said she, in a faltering voice, "to see this dear child grow up and arrive at years of discretion, if it so please Heaven And *that* one will keep an eye of interest on the course of her life, and observe what fate He who rules over the destinies of us all has assigned to her, then let that person judge whether the possession of this document will be of advantage to her, and if so, let her be informed of her mother's reasons for keeping her in ignorance of it, and preventing her from adopting the rank to which it entitles her"

This solemn and touching address of Angela's made a deep impression on her hearers, but suddenly they shuddered involuntarily, for Van der Néess, who had been ready to burst with anger during this speech, broke out into a loud savage laugh, the sure precursor of an access of rage, and bending forwards he cried, "There, your worships, now you have it! Did I not tell you, you would hear nothing but nonsense? I know her of old! but none of you would believe me What is the use of listening to such a farrago of nonsense I should have brought her to reason in two words, and all this trash would not have sunk so deep into her head Sign fool! I command you! and leave the rest to those who understand such matters"

But Angela proved on this occasion that she was not wholly destitute of influence when she deemed it worth her while to exert it With sudden energy she seized hold of Van der Néess' arm, who trembled as she said, in a stern voice, "Néess, I desire you will comply with all that I, these worthy gentlemen and my aunt, shall decide Behave yourself quietly, or I shall prove to you, that I have rights as holy and well founded as yours, and that it is not from ignorance I leave my fortune in your hands Promise, I say, to agree to whatever we shall settle, before we leave this place"

"Well, well," cried Van der Néess, "you need not waste so much eloquence on the subject. Can you name a single instance of my having forced you to do anything you did not like? You are a foolish little thing, Angela, but you know you always have your own way at last We poor husbands have no chance," he added, grinning at this stale joke, and winking confidentially at the gentlemen

Angela hereupon released his arm, and turning with an air of eager expectation towards her friends, said timidly, "Will it please you to give me your opinion"

Urica wept in silence, everything she saw and heard increased her love and respect for her niece. Van Mar-seeven shared her feelings. "All you have said is so clear and plausible," he replied, "that it would be impossible to hear you without being convinced of the justice of your arguments. Besides, you have so clearly pointed out the proper course to be pursued in the future, with regard to this affair, in which we have all proved ourselves somewhat too hasty, that I am sure there can be but one opinion amongst us—namely, *'that you see the matter in the true light, and that you have decided aright'*."

At the same moment Urica pressed Angela to her bosom, and cried, through her tears, "Oh, forgive me, Angela! forgive me, for being so hasty in following the dictates of my ambitious heart, henceforward I will look up to you for counsel, I will learn true wisdom from you, and you shall teach me to take a purer and higher view of life."

"Aha," exclaimed Neess, in a tone of satisfaction, for he felt indefinitely flattered at the respect that was shown to his wife. But the latter, with grave gentleness, disclaimed all praise, and seemed half ashamed of the enthusiastic admiration expressed by Cornelius Hooft, who, bending low, kissed her hand with the most devoted respect.

At length the party had sufficiently recovered from their emotion to return to the document. Mynherr van Mar-seeven sat down beneath the old lime-tree and added, as a codicil, these words—

"We, the undersigned, take God to witness, that we will keep this document, which invests Floris van der Néess with the rank of countess, an inviolable secret from the said Floris, till she shall have attained her majority, or till any important event shall take place in her life, when, by general consent, the knowledge of her rank may be deemed serviceable to her."

This clause was signed by all the party, including Van der Neess, who, after some muttered objections, yielded to Angela's serious remonstrances.

"But," said he, angrily, throwing away his pen, "what's to be done about the will now? Is that all moonshine?"

"Set your mind at rest about the will, Van der Néess," said the burgo-master, "it remains in full force."

The door leading to the hall had been locked during this important consultation, in order to provide against any interruption, but, for some little time, sounds of plaintive weeping had been heard to issue from thence, occasionally interrupted by the tones of Caas' fiddle. However, the music seemed to prove ineffectual in soothing this distress, as it gradually ceased altogether, while the sobs became more audible every moment. Van der Neess, Angela, and Urica, who in this single instance were perfectly of one mind, had long felt for the grief of poor Floris at being banished from their presence, and their first impulse was to set her at liberty.

"Really," cried Urica, "we require something to refresh our wearied spirits, let us open the door and call in our lovely little Floris."

"Oh, yes!" cried Néess, in a transport of delight. "Our lady aunt is quite right—that was well thought of. Thank you, thank you, noble aunt!" and he rushed towards the door, and flung it open. In another minute, Floris darted out of the dark hall into the dusky court, like a ray of sunshine.

She looked uncommonly lovely the tears were yet trembling, like dew-drops, on her angelic countenance, while her eyes sparkled with joy at being released from her confinement, and a sweet smile displayed her pearly teeth

She looked around for a moment, then threw herself into Urica's outstretched arms

"My sweet angel! my darling Floris!" cried the countess, as she caressed the child in the most affectionate manner

"Oh, go! you are just as naughty as the rest," said the child, assuming a pretty little pouting air "It was very unkind to keep me shut up so long Why did you not tell them to let me come to you before? or was it that they would not do as you wished?"

"No," replied Urica, affected by the question, "nobody would do as I wished but they were all in the right, and your Urica was the only one in the wrong"

"Oh, no! don't believe that," cried Floris, clasping her arms round Urica's neck, and loading her with kisses "You are always in the right, and I will only do what you wish All you tell me to do is so pleasant, and so easy, and so amusing Do, dear mamma, pray," said she, turning to Angela, "let me do what Aunt Urica wishes I always like that better than anything else"

Angela gently took the little hand Floris held out to her, and said, mildly,

"But would you do it if your mother considered it hurtful to you, and if it would give her pain?"

Her voice trembled at these words, and the child instantly sprang away from her aunt's lap, and rushing into her mother's arms, said, affectionately,

"No, no, mamma! I will do nothing to give you pain I won't do what dear Aunt Urica wishes, if it would make you sad Indeed I won't"

"Humph!" ejaculated Van der Neess, in a tone of disappointment, as he turned upon his heel "I thought we might have caught her yet"

"This is merely an afterpiece, tending to the same point as the other," said Cornelius Hooft

"But we must put an end to it," said Angela, "for it is too agitating for my dear aunt As the evening is so fine, I propose we should stay here and partake of the refreshments which I see Susa is preparing for us I think some one knocked just now, perhaps it may be my dear cousin Flavia"

It was, indeed, Madame van Marseeven, she joined the group beneath the old lime-tree, and Susa spread out before them a simple but inviting meal of fresh milk, tempting fruit, and excellent homemade cakes The twilight was gradually fading into darkness, when at length the full moon, gliding over the waters, rose above the wall of the court, and enlivened the scene with its soft mellow light

When its rays fell on little Floris's waving ringlets, she started from her seat as if she had been called away by a playfellow, and, throwing off her loose robe of blue damask, she cried,

"Now I must go and dance with the moon! Look at me, dear Aunt Urica, and you will see how I do that The moon likes it as much as I do, jump and turn about as I may, it follows me everywhere, and always

looks over my shoulders' Indeed, the moon and I are very fond of each other!"

So saying, she stretched out her little hands, and smiled and nodded to it

"Ah, I believe you!" cried Urica, "if I were the moon, I should look forward with delight to the evening when I might see you again"

"So it does," said Floris, with a grave and confident nod of her head, while she busied herself in turning up the sleeves of her little shift

Caas was then summoned But who shall describe his feelings on being called on to perform before the mighty burgomaster, the sheriff, and these two noble ladies? Pride and despair struggled in the heart of the poor young virtuoso

"Mercy on me," thought he, "I would rather they set all the dogs at me when I practise on the canal, or even, though it would be a grievous pity, I would rather give up my precious piece of 'kalophonium' to Van der NĒess than be doomed to play the fiddle before these mighty people, who have all the musical bands of the town at their command And yet, if it were but once, it would be something to say that I had played before the chief burgomaster and the sheriff, I should be a person of consequence

Encouraged by this idea, Caas repeatedly passed his bowstring over his treasured piece of "kalophonium," which he had fastened to a ribbon, and constantly wore about his neck to save it from Van der NĒess, who always kept his eye on it, and then drawing the bow across the strings, called forth a few dissonant notes, to apprise Floris that he was ready

The little girl then ran across the space, that had been cleared for her, to that part of the court where the spectators were seated, and demanded her slippers of Van der NĒess This produced a very amusing interlude, for Van der NĒess was fairly obliged to draw them forth from the pocket of his plush inexpressibles, where he always kept them, he did not seem much to relish this, and muttered something to himself, for he was half-ashamed of the ridiculous position in which he was placed But this did not last long, for Floris almost tore the slippers out of his hands, in her eagerness, and hastily put them on, then placing herself opposite the moon, she fixed her eyes upon it, and commenced her self-invented fanciful moonshine dance, which for the moment caused Van der NĒess to forget all his low grovelling desires, and to abandon himself wholly to the enjoyment of a father's happiness

Like him, all the spectators were spell-bound by Floris's performance, it seemed to be something miraculous—incomprehensible, and in a transport of admiration they insensibly fell into the same delusion to which Floris so fondly clung—that the moon was dancing with her, and that she was not alone She treated it as a playmate, and laughed, danced, and jested away, in all the gaiety of her innocent heart Her attitudes were picturesque and graceful in the extreme, her little feet scarcely touched the ground, as she seemed to glide through the air, the movements of her arms, and her lovely head which was now bent down, now thrown back proudly as if in defiance, were the perfection of symmetry—she unconsciously expressed in her dancing that poetry of feeling which reigned in her heart Occasionally she would utter some words, as if she were teasing the moon, or replying to it then clap her hands

and laugh aloud, if by some sudden change of position she imagined she had taken the moon by surprise, and prevented it from following her,—then she would clasp her hands above her curly head, and, stealing along on tiptoe, cast a sly glance at her bright playmate, to see whether she was still observed and followed, till, at length, even the spectators could scarcely forbear thinking the silent orb that was gliding through the dark blue vault above them must be endowed with life and feeling, and unconsciously glanced up to ascertain whether it shared the interest it excited in the lovely child.

She never once stopped this evening, as was her wont, to rest. She was indefatigable, her imagination seemed to be inexhaustible, yet she would occasionally cease dancing, as if to allow some repose to her companion and herself, but always continued to hold converse with the moon, in pantomime, to which she would suffer no interruption, as if conscious of her mother's anxiety on her account, she would then say, halt to herself,

"It won't leave off yet" •

Suddenly a silvery cloud passed over the moon, and veiled it from her sight, and the bright light around her faded away. Floris uttered a joyful exclamation, and, with a merry laugh, ran into her mother's arms, saying,

"Now it is gone—it is gone to bed" •

All her friends sought to persuade Floris to do the same, and, as she had really wearied herself with dancing, she consented to be led away by Susa, after she had bid "good night" to all the company, utterly unconscious of the rapturous admiration she had excited.

Before the party separated, Mynherr van Marseeven, who had heard something of Cassian's indefatigable perseverance, called to him and desired him to come to his house on the succeeding day. Thenceforward Caas received regular instructions from the master of the bands, and learnt to play from music on a very different fiddle. The burgomaster further presented him with a neat suit of clothes, and insisted on his attending a public school, at certain hours, and Cassian, who was naturally quick and intelligent, did great credit to his instructors.

But Van der Neess was not pleased with all this, for it took up much of Caas' time, and he would soon have interfered, had he not been afraid of offending the chief burgomaster, who he knew, often had it in his power to call him to account for sundry little practices he now consented to overlook for Angela's sake.

From that day forward, Van Marseeven always listened with interest and attention when his wife spoke of Angela, and Cornelius Hooft, to Urica's infinite amusement, was on the point of falling in love with Angela, for he even admired her appearance, and was subject to fits of absence for several days, while he insisted on delivering every message to Angela in person.

CHAPTER XX

THE hints Van der Neess had dropped with regard to the precarious state of Urica's fortune, had not escaped Mynherr van Marseeven's memory, and had made some impression on his mind as he knew the wary usurer kept a sharp eye on all the transactions of the great Amsterdam money-market, and

he therefore took immediate measures to ascertain the true state of the case

Notwithstanding the precautions Urica had taken, it was impossible to keep an affair of this importance altogether secret, thus, Van Marseeven's judicious inquiries soon brought him pretty near the truth, which so infinitely surpassed his worst apprehensions, that he was seriously alarmed, for he plainly saw, that if the Duke of Montrose's expedition, in which Urica's husband was so deeply committed, should prove unsuccessful, or the young king hesitate to acknowledge the promise of repayment, Urica, from being one of the richest landed proprietors, would be reduced to little better than actual poverty

In this state of things, Van Marseeven felt the necessity of interfering, but he hesitated for a moment how to proceed. His position towards Lord Fawcett was of a peculiar nature. Notwithstanding the esteem these two able men felt for each other, there was a sort of distance kept up between them, and little differences occasionally took place, which, to a cursory observer, would have appeared unaccountable, since their paths in life were so widely separated, and could never by any possibility cross each other.

But the mystery was accounted for in the wide disparity of their characters. Van Marseeven had not the slightest shadow of genius, and never acted on impulse. His views and actions were the result of well-weighed calculation. He had thought much and deeply, nothing ever escaped his observation, and experience, added to the advantages resulting from the important situation he had so long filled, had rendered him a refined diplomatist, with all this, he held in secret though sovereign contempt all actions that were only the result of momentary inspiration.

Lord Fawcett was a perfect contrast to him in every point of view. he was a genius, inspired by the loftiest aspirations—the noblest desires, and deeply impressed with the truth and efficacy of his views and intentions, he persuaded rather than convinced those who listened to him, for his enthusiasm captivated their understanding. Add to this, he possessed great perseverance, firmness, decision, and quick penetration, but he seldom paused to reason on any plan which his ardent imagination suggested, and his noble heart urged him to perform.

It is evident there could be but little sympathy between two men of such different dispositions, however much they might feel inclined to do each other justice, for the conduct and opinions of one were a tacit condemnation of those of the other.

But Van Marseeven now felt it incumbent upon him to open Lord Fawcett's eyes to the fate he was preparing for Urica, for he did him the justice to feel convinced that he had overlooked this, in the pressure of affairs which demanded his constant attention. With this view, he sought to win Lord Fawcett's confidence, and the frank, unsuspecting disposition of the latter rendered this no difficult task for one who had always possessed his esteem.

News had arrived of the unfavourable reception the young king had met with in France, and the failure of his hopes in Ireland. He had passed a short time in the island of Jersey, and was now returning to Holland, to meet another deputation of the Scots parliament, at Breda. Lord Fawcett shared the indignation of the Duke of Montrose, at what

they deemed so great a compromise of dignity, but the duke still adhered to his purpose, and hastened his preparations. Van Marseeven could fully enter into Fawcett's feelings, though he did not approve of the perilous enterprise in which he was engaged, and Fawcett, excited and hurt, felt relieved by the sympathy he evinced, and entered into a long, confidential conversation with him on this subject, which at length led to the explanation Van Marseeven so eagerly desired. It then appeared, that the whole of Urica's fortune, including some money raised upon her jewels, and a considerable sum procured by a mortgage on her palace at the Hague, had flowed into the military exchequer of the Duke of Montrose, and was for the most part spent. Though for a moment appalled by this statement, Van Marseeven refrained from uttering a single reproach, for he felt fully persuaded of the purity and uprightness of Fawcett's intentions, but he exerted himself to find out a remedy for the evil, as he did not by any means deem the security sufficient. He had been elected ambassador by the States-General, to meet the king at Breda, and hoped this circumstance would enable him to be of service to Urica, in this affair.

Lord Fawcett, struck by his representations, intrusted to him a small box, containing all the papers relating to the transaction, and further, confided to him all his own plans. He stated it had originally been Urica's design to accompany him in this campaign, as on a former occasion, but that the sudden resolution of the Duke of Montrose, to start immediately, had determined him to dissuade her from so doing, since he did not consider the scheme sufficiently ripe, and would not expose her to the innumerable dangers he foresaw. Van Marseeven could not help admiring the heroic devotion of this man, for he plainly saw he deemed the enterprise one of fearful risk, and yet never for a moment relaxed in his ardour.

When they parted, it was with mutual feelings of increased esteem and interest, though Van Marseeven could scarcely understand how he could feel so mildly towards the man who had so deeply compromised Urica's welfare. Lord Fawcett, on the contrary, felt as if a weight had been removed from his heart, and looked on Van Marseeven as a true and valued friend.

It was some time ere Lord Fawcett could summon courage to acquaint Urica with his desire of setting out alone, yet he felt persuaded she suspected his intentions, from the touching softness and melancholy earnestness of her manner, even on the most trifling occasions, and the emotion she betrayed when he spoke of his plans.

At length, he could no longer defer fulfilling this painful task, for it wanted but a few days of the time fixed on for the departure of the expedition. He took Urica's hand, and explained to her, in a few words, his wishes and the motives which had called them forth, he did not conceal from her the dangers of the undertaking, nor the uncertainty of its issue, dwelt for a while on his own painful feelings, and then spoke of his hopes for the future.

Urica's eye sunk to the ground, the colour faded from her cheek, she gasped for breath, and a faint scream burst from her oppressed heart. Lord Fawcett trembled at these sad demonstrations of her sorrow, he threw his arms around her, clasped her to his bosom, and strove to com-

fort her, but his manly voice quivered, and the words died away on his lips

A solemn and melancholy silence ensued. Urica, overcome by the most poignant sorrow, and the saddest presentiments, dared not trust herself to speak, she felt as if she were destined henceforth to drain the cup of sorrow to the dregs, and instinctively shrank back, and placed her hands before her face to ward it off. When, at length, she looked up, she found that Lord Fawcett had sunk down at her feet, while tears, which he was not ashamed to show, coursed down his noble countenance.

"Speak, Urica," he cried, in accents of the deepest emotion, "in mercy, speak! you pierce me to the heart."

Here a cry of agony broke from Urica's lips. "Fawcett," she said then, in a voice of hopeless despair, "you have decided—we part—" she paused, shuddering for a voice in her heart whispered, "for ever!" Overcome by this heart-rending effort, she sank senseless into Lord Fawcett's arms.

A few days more and Lord Fawcett was gone—he had sailed with the expedition, under the command of the Duke of Montrose, towards the shores of Great Britain. Alas! Urica's presentiments proved but too true—she never saw him again. The ill-success of this daring enterprise is but too well known, and Lord Fawcett, with three or four others, shared the fate of their gallant leader, and was executed on an accusation of high treason.

All attempts to describe Urica's state of mind, when she heard this fatal news, would be vain. Her love to Lord Fawcett had been the ruling principle of her life—he, the centre of all her thoughts and actions—ever since she knew him, to live and to love had appeared synonymous terms. Henceforth life must be to her a hopeless blank—death, the only boon for which she prayed to heaven, but alas! sorrow does not always wound to the death, but like slow poison, gradually saps the sources of life, and dooms the hapless sufferer to linger through an existence of protracted torments.

Thus it was with Urica, when, ten years later, General Monk accomplished what the Duke of Montrose and his noble friend projected and failed in, she was still dragging on her weary days. The only source of comfort to which she had looked forward, that of seeing Lord Fawcett's children, was denied her, and though they had now arrived at an age of independence no inclination was showed on their part to comply with her desire of seeing them, and the letters she wrote received no reply. The news of General Monk's success affected her greatly, for it recalled to her mind the cause of all her sufferings, and renewed her poignant sorrow. Though resigned to her fate, she lived but in the memory of the past.

VALDARNO, OR, THE ORDEAL OF ART-WORSHIP

A BIOGRAPHY

CHAPTER XI

I FOUND Piombino at the inn, to which I made my way, and, parting with him there, directed my course to the castle, bearing with me my dreadful secret. My gister had already proceeded with her husband on a tour through the other states, and I was alone to brood over recent domestic occurrences.

My mind was rippled like the gilded sea at sunset, over which scuds a breeze, and was lighted up by an unnatural glare. Late events, which I knew too well to be real, took the form of a dream, and it was with difficulty that I sorted them and looked steadily at their import. I could not but shudder lest there should come over me another twilight, or worse, a total eclipse of reason, during whose dire occultation the consecutive vanishes, the beautiful is sucked up as in a whirlpool, while the formless takes the infinite at a stride. My voyage, launched upon under sound of trumpet, yet so void of recompense, was like that of a good vessel which quits harbour on an unlucky day.

I sent a message to Ippolito, by Piombino, to join me at Aula. Half asleep, half dreaming at the time of his arrival, I was turning all things over in my mind, especially the mystery attached to his birth. The door stood open, and, in its turn, the vision that I had beheld in the cavern returned. I saw the same face that had so charmed my senses. My heart began to throb slowly but violently, at the same moment the figure rushed into my arms. I could not but smile on finding it was Ippolito himself.

"Are we not to be present at the Platonic Academy to-morrow?"

When he had spoken these few words, I dissociated him from the vision, so destructive of the fanciful's reality. Afterwards, however, when I came to look well into his face, which surpassed even the feminine in lustre, and to recur to the vision, which did not cease to haunt my affections, the words of Angus would return to mind. Sometimes, indeed, as he sat with me, I thought that none but a female spirit could animate features so delicate, or look out at such sinless eyes. Perhaps, struck by the love I showed him, he was led to ask if he were not my brother.

"Why that question, sweet child?"

"Who could my father be, unless it were my benefactor?" he inquired, and his looks apprised me that he had been led to think I might be his brother. Hastening to undeceive him, I said,

"You are a foundling, my child."

He looked unhappy, and, in a low voice, said, that his only desire was to be my brother.

"All that I have is yours," I rejoined, "and I love you better than any other in this world."

"O, my brother!" said Ippolito, "why should I wish for more than to be loved by you?"

"Have you never heard, dear boy, whence you came?"

"No, as long as I remember, I have lived with Marco Musonio, at Bolsena, or in the *Via di Bisogno*."

"Did you not, some years ago, receive a visit from a stranger, named Angus?"

"Yes, he took much notice of me, and said, laughingly, that I was a little girl, and that my name was Adora."

"Did he not question you on your birth?"

"No, but he declared that we had met in the country of the great Chartreuse, in France."

"Were you ever there?"

"Never, I told him so, and he was incredulous but he looked so sure, I should have believed him had not his assertion been opposed to my personal recollection."

"You shall hear your history. I have it fortunately in the handwriting of my father, who left it for you among his papers. I will read it to you now. I have not perused it, having already heard all particulars from the lips of the writer. It will give me great pleasure to go through it with you, dear Ippolito, whom it so nearly concerns."

It ran as follows —

"THE FOUNDLING"

"In the year of the late earthquake, I was at Valanidi with the countess and my two children. The preceding period had been very wet, but the weather had become fine and warm with the exception of rainstorms usual at the spring season. I was some distance from our home on the fatal day, having crossed the land which lies between Boya and Aspramonte, on the day before, to sleep at a neighbour's house. In the morning I ascended the last-named mountain, whence I might enjoy the view of the fertile valley and its river, the olives, mulberries, and vines. That view was dear to me, it was the birthplace of a departed friend, I wished to behold it once more. I reached a considerable elevation, and at mid-day sat down on the naked granite to rest myself, and to feast my eyes on the glorious prospect, while my heart dwelt on past recollections."

"But, what is man? Alas, at the most, only distinguished among his fellows, but how insignificant as a part of nature! I had scarcely been seated half an hour, when a scene the most astonishing ensued. A shepherd, who slept by his flock on the hill-side not far beneath me, was roused by the howlings of his dog. The flock had turned itself in all directions, as if alarmed, some running up the hill, and stopping suddenly, all looking as sheep do in the slaughter-house, amid the flow and scent of blood. A few moments later, I heard subterraneous thunder, and felt the rock on which I sat oscillate beneath me. I stood up in mute surprise, which speedily changed into consternation, for while I looked the mountain opened below me and closed. The shepherd and his flock were at some distance beneath the fearful aperture, and as its jaws of granite gaped, they were thrown off their legs and rolled down the steep. But this danger over, another speedily overtook them. Before they reached the mountain gorge beneath, the soil from which they had been precipitated followed, and, with it, they contributed only to fill up the gulf. They had vanished in a moment, I was still safe! As I looked around in silent horror, I beheld a forest on my right descending in one mass into the valley. Some of its lofty trees were overthrown, most of them re-

mained erect, as, with the loosened soil in which they grew, they travelled towards the plain. There they halted, there to live on, and there be watered by the swollen river which had been before fed by their own mountain streams. All around me was desolate, the granite was bared. I had sat myself down within the shade of olives and vines, bordered with sweet-scented broom, rose, laurel, and citron, I arose to witness a bare region, my soul no less naked! I thought not of myself, but hastily descended with a heart ready to rescue a fellow creature, but, in a few minutes, I bethought myself how vain would be my attempt. Submissive to an almighty will, I turned my steps towards home. In my way, I found cottages, some overturned, some displaced from their former site, and with them the lands. At a distance stood their owners, in whose faces I saw, as in a glass, that look of horror which occupied mine, and at which my hair bristled afresh. I endeavoured to cross the valley, but was unable to overcome the obstacles, for the fields and plantations of the mountain had covered it, in many places had formed rugged and steep embankments where just before there had been a plain. Foiled in each attempt to make my way home, I took the direction of Reggio, which was near, and with difficulty reached it, but it was no longer the place which it had been.

"Before I arrived at the town, I saw, from the hills above it that the shock had not been confined to Aspramonte. The villas outside it were broken into large fragments, some of which stood, while others had fallen. As I entered, silence and despair greeted me, the streets were the home of the homeless. Beside a heap of ruins, and on a bed made of sweet-scented broom, lay a fine male child, over whose remains, with an infant in her arms, wept a mother. Two little children who were with her, the elder a girl of about three, the younger a boy of two years old, slept deeply by the side of their father. They each held a hand, and had fallen asleep fatigued with vainly imploring their exhausted parent to wake up. This was but one of many pictures of mourning, and I stood in the midst, gazing by turns on what was near and afar. The town looked battered by some enemy that had marched on never to return, for there were no fears, the worst appeared done. Yet, in the midst of despair, did new fear have occasion to awaken—the paralysed heart to revive—and undergo another struggle. All the dogs in the vicinity of where I was suddenly set up a fearful howl, as if the signal were too well known, the populace looked at each other, no longer mute and hopeless, wrung their hands and groaned, and knelt, and uttered the names of well-known saints, of friends, of kindred, and of the Eternal. But the gestures and woes of men were but a prelude to what instantaneously followed. The earth heaved, houses, men, and cattle fell in confusion together, all was as soon still again.

"I arose from the earth, on which I had been thrown down in time to see the beams of a house close by batter down its own walls. The buildings were all upon one another. I looked for my adopted neighbours, I saw the fissure of a chasm which had opened and shut. The father and his two children were gone, Nature had buried them, had engulfed her living. The mother lay by the side of the miraculous tomb thus made, thus filled, and thus with eternity blended, her infant shaded by her bosom. The convulsion by which she had been precipitated to the earth only shook her child from the breast where it slept. She knew nothing,

and happy at such a moment was she to be unconscious. Her hair was spread over the grave, her arms, and the infant they bore, had, also, dropped gently upon it, and thus did Nature add a monument to the tomb she had made. I sat by the side of it with my face buried in my hands, and my elbows resting on my knees, I wept.

"Afar and near the dirge of the afflicted was expressed in groan and scream, all asked for help, and no one heeded another. The ruins had a voice—the voice of hundreds entombed in their own dwellings. I explored the chasm, and saw steps near it by the aid of a charitable labourer, I opened a way into a cellar, where I saw the lost father with his eyes wide open, he, and one of the children, a girl, was alive, the other I vainly sought to restore. When his senses returned, he arose, looked wildly around with his large dark eyes, and uttered the remarkable words 'I have risen again!' He then raised his living daughter on his shoulder, and, like the spirit of the earthquake, walked away, his brain turned with trouble, leaving me to provide safety for the infant and mother. By this time it was much past midnight, whose dusky, though star-enchanted hour, was the witness of shame and confusion. The earthquake was not confined to matter, its convulsion had touched the soul, and had swallowed up humanity in the wreck. Cruelty, and its victim, suffering, had supplanted mutual love, the ties of nature were all slackened, the good were found more selfish than before, as well as the wicked. Had the ruin been less general, all might have been saved, as it was, there was no one to help any save his own.

"The shock was a signal to the peasantry, both of the town and adjacent villages, to seek out the dwellings of the rich for plunder for the agents of the law, like the rest of men, were helpless. As I gave myself up to restore the widow to her only child, the bandits rushed by into the town, in troops, making a jest of tottering walls and falling towers. Amid all this riot, I almost shrank from my charge, and thought of my family at Valanidi with dire apprehension.

"I proceeded a few yards from my post in search of water, and round the corner of a street found a well which overflowed in abundance, but was muddy and impregnated with sulphur. As I dipped a broken jug into the bubbling flood, I groaned at the vanity of man, how uncertain his tenure even of time! Opposite me were the fresh remains of a monastery of large dimensions, the vaulted arches alone, of what appeared the craggiest, had sustained the shock and borne the weight of the ruins. From within proceeded the voice of woe and the language of reproach, but it was heeded by none and heard by few. The poor bereaved mother drank of the water, the child refused it. Among the fragments around me I found an iron pot, and, from amidst the fallen stones, gathered up some macaroni. Next I kindled a fire, and boiled the food, with which I quieted the ceaseless cry of the child. The mother, unable to move, raised her large and gentle eyes, which she fixed upon me with a fervour which thrilled through my soul. In that look she thanked me, blessed me, besought me not to desert her babe. She sighed deeply, moaned piteously with an expression of weeping, though no tear came forth to give hope of recovery. The flesh of her limbs quivered, her eyes remained fixed upon me, but their pupils had become dilated and sightless. She breathed after a long interval, and was then still for ever. I closed her eyes, took a gem from her finger, buried her by the side of her chil-

dren, and departed with her lovely infant in the direction taken by its father. The sun had risen as it daily rises over Palmyra. It cheered what was left, and promised what the heart, unassisted by its beams, could not have hoped. I went my way, crossing the fields which lie towards Valanidi, intending to return and seek intelligence of the infant's parentage, and hoping to recover it a father. The clumps of agrumi, composed of bergamot, orange, citron, lemon, and other of the species, were in many places under water, the rivers and streams being blocked up and swollen by displacements of the soil. This was not the only impediment to my homeward journey, large clumps of mulberry-trees and olives, with their intermingled vines, all of which grow amidst a profusion of grain in the same field, were prostrate, and I had to climb over branches, wade through bogs, and ascend embankments, more difficult to steer through than the adjacent mountains to traverse at other times. Though all that I had witnessed inspired a fear that the earthquake had been yet more disastrous abroad than my own eyes could vouch for, I was thankful to find, that as I advanced towards my own country the mischief faded from my sight. At last I got home, and found my family and dwelling secure the sweetness of that security was such as neither narrative nor thanksgiving can declare.

"Several times during my stay at Valanidi I revisited Reggio, to the end that I might identify the parents of the boy, but I met with no success. The utmost that I could learn was, that they were not Italians, and that the father had not been again seen with his daughter in that place. To this day, all my inquiries about this ill-fated family have been fruitless. The ring, now in Ippolito's possession, I took from the finger of his mother. It is marked inside, at the back of the ruby, with the initial A.

"The last time I saw Ippolito, the form of his countenance suggested a curious train of thought. It has a striking resemblance to one in whose presence I have not been for many years—I allude to the Marchioness of Ferrini. The opportunity of his meeting her may occur one day if it does, let him carry his ring with him, and show it to her. The idea out of which this suggestion comes is vague, and admits of no explanation: it has no other basis than that of an imagined resemblance between the lady and the child.

"Finally, I commend this charming boy to my son's brotherly affection, even to such love as is due to kindred—he is an orphan, and his birth is illustrious."

Ippolito was deeply affected at hearing the contents of the manuscript, which gave so mournful a history of his unknown house, and he asked leave to retain the paper in his possession.

I was not a little startled at my father's allusion to Dione, after my own discovery and subsequent meditations on that exciting subject.

CHAPTER XII

"You spoke of the Platonic Academy. Musonio's discourse was to have been three weeks since," said I to Ippolito.

"The meeting was postponed, owing to political causes, and is now to take place to-morrow," replied he.

"Then we will go," I said, "and I can leave you once more with Pulci, at Florence."

"You will be very much surprised to hear the opinions Musonio entertains," observed the youth

"I wish much to be present," said I, "for his notions concern the race to which I belong—he, like myself, is Etruscan"

"He has told me his principles again and again," rejoined Ippolito, "and I see the truth of them as plainly as I perceive an order in nature, yet I cannot feel it"

"What influence have the doctrines held by Pulci on your mind?"

"The very opposite of what I have experienced from Musonio's philosophy, I am unable, as yet, to perceive the truth of Christianity, but I feel it plainly in my heart"

"And it is sufficient to know it there, to see it, would be to stand before the opening heavens, it is too great for mortal eyes to behold"

In the days of the great Lorenzo, philosophy and religion were companions as often as rivals Pico, the Lord of Mirandola, whose vast understanding reflected all human knowledge, had harmonized them in his divine writings, a man who was the ornament of that age, and the life of the Platonic Academy When Lorenzo and a magnificent circle, amongst whom every thought that Plato first gave birth to became newly embodied, had retired from the stage, Rucellai, his kinsman, invited the Platonists to his own gardens in the Via della Scala, and there the meetings were further continued for a time But, with the banishment of the Medici, despite the efforts of other men, the academy fell, and Platonism no longer had a home

It is not uncommon for the man of genius to reverence some one contemporary above the rest of his enlightened fellow-mortals, and to deem him even the greatest of men The one he thus looks up to must be his elder, and, in some high attainment, his better Man is in dependence on man, the living must connect him with the past, introduce him to the mighty, whose spirits are inseparable from the twilight glory of its deathless shades He cannot get there alone, he wants a hand to guide him to cities which once were, but now lie back as if beneath the horizon, floating as in an ancient sunset, while the world itself expects a morrow

The past is sacred ground! The multitude clings to the by-gone time, it is its history, but the future is a yet more distant country, to which the few alone dare emigrate It is a howling wilderness, which has to be subdued and civilised, it is bristled with dayless forests, it is peopled with unnamed giants But there is a sun which reaches its waters, and shines upon as vast a tract as the land where the mighty rest, and it shines there with hope for the living—with promise for the longing heart of man! It was Musonio who was destined to become my last idol, to connect me with the past and the future, too, of which his awful intellect constituted the central link As a creature of mind, I never have known his equal! He had no vanity, he desired no applause, his only wish was fame, not for himself but for his philosophy, which he believed to be a well-shaded portrait of the Omniscient But of such reputation a smile expressed his despair, at least in the age possessing him—an age which was his sepulchre, his fellow-mortals the cold dust which completed his living tomb! Still, thus buried in life instead of death, thus imbedded in the dark impenetrable mould of human prejudice, his intellect struck the deeper root and bore perennial leaves, and he wished not his self-acquired knowledge to perish with him Having known me and sounded my

depths, he at once looked to me as a depositary for his secrets, as a hand that would receive them thankfully and pass them on religiously, as the clear-minded Greek had done for his master of old, and as less efficiently the saints had done for their divine instructor, who said and did far greater things than have been recorded. He had trained Ippolito in part with a view to make him his disciple, but finding in me a mature, as well as willing pupil, he was anxious to teach me what he knew and faithfully will I edit my sacred book, that it may worthily succeed to that which Tages gave us at religion's dawn.

"This is the fittest hour for the expression of high thoughts," said Musonio, as, on the appointed evening, about two hours before twilight, we found ourselves happily met in the Rucellai gardens, "nor is the place and time ill-suited to such occupation. The calmness of the hour is with me a check to imagination, and an encourager of reason, the quiet of the scene around us, and the fertility of nature and art on every side, forbid me to express thoughts inconsistent with intellectual truth. When we discuss the objects of nature, how they guide us, a leaf is a more formidable opponent by far than man, its silent advocacy of the real says more than all the citations of human learning.

To this view I gave assent, and desired the philosopher to proceed, but, by this time, a circle of hearers had arrived and we took our places among the crowd. Ippolito, who was used to these discussions, lead me to a seat in front of the speaker. The following short account of the philosopher's address was written down on the night of that memorable meeting. I well remember with what applause he was received by the members of the academy, and the numerous discussions to which, for some time after, his short but far reaching axioms gave rise.

"Were the ideas which I am about to express my own," said Musonio, "were they due only to the workings of one mind, I should speak with diffidence, but they are not. I owe them in great part to the sacred writings of the ancients, to whose now palsied tongue I have learned the root, obtained through the study of Etruscan remains, of which many are still in possession of the world, though little known. Respect them then the more, they are amongst the most early of spiritual treasures, and emanate from a select race whose minds were of a mathematical order. The truths which they contain, though thus old, are imperishable, if lost, they must be found again. They concern our present happiness and future fate, they contain the only philosophy which reconciles all things, which allows injustice to glory in its own evils, which assures us that even as reason, and all that else is good, exists, so must all endure for ever. It proves that the universe in its least as well as greatest operations, is to be eventually revealed, that man, in common with his fellow-creatures beneath him, has a share in all, it convinces by reason alone, not subject to the sceptic's doubt, but indisputably that he will take a part in all things future, that he has already throughout the past been an actor."

My curiosity was deeply touched by these statements. I desired to possess a key said to open such stores of knowledge, of wisdom supposed to be hidden from mortals.

As the philosopher here paused, in expectation of remarks from some one of the audience, I myself intreated him to give us an account of discoveries thus surprising.

"My mind," said the priest of nature, "is full of its responsibilities, and would place before you, in one view, the system it has perceived in things. There are certain truths palpable to reason which we deduce from endless observation, these most of you will follow, but there are men who invite us to explain admitted laws, and in the company of such the grand argument is unattainable."

"Give us an example," said one of the members.

"If, for instance, you tell such men that matter cannot be destroyed," said Musonio, "in place of the ready assent which is due to a proposition thus obvious in philosophy, there is an expression of doubt and wonder. To many a man the consumption of the oil which feeds his lamp is the destruction of matter. He cannot trace its aerial elements to the sky, or perceive them dropping again upon the earth to mingle with its productions. Nor can we by the senses alone, but we know that such things are. Through endless ages not a single particle is lost. The atom is imperishable, it is the true type of immortality."

"All this I can understand," rejoined the member who had before spoken.

"It is with such as you," continued Musonio, "that I would converse. The materials of which the universe consists are of an imperishable nature, they were admitted to be so by the Etruscan priesthood, if I have deciphered their characters aright, and the experience of many thousand years, even of alchemy itself, has confirmed the truth. But not only did the wise men consider that matter was imperishable, but that its laws were immutable, consequently eternal, and this opinion has been equally confirmed by time."

All assented, silently, being anxious to hear his views without delay.

"The old Etruscans," resumed the thoughtful man, "declare in their sacred writings that the universe is finite in extent, how otherwise could it have been reduced to order, since the illimitable must ever elude the hand of power, though it work in eternity? Be sure that He who compasseth all round about, is infinite alone, and without a rival. He hath limited the stars, he hath numbered them no less distinctly than the sand upon the ancient shores. Though they may appear unnumberable to the finger of man long before he has had time to count up the vastness of a single continent of light, or seeming isle, in those peaceful seas (through which the comets sail undangered), they are bounded by omniscient vision, even as each is singled out, so a finite number represents all. Canst thou comprehend these truths?"

"I perceive," said I, "that the Infinite hath put in order a finite system, under immutable, eternal laws."

"Then," said the philosopher, "thou knowest much, but the Etruscans taught us still more. They insisted that from these truths we must deduce the real resurrection from the dead, the revival of all that has been. For, say they, the laws of matter are ever in action, no union of elements can subsist always, change succeeds to change. The hills crumble away, mountains are thrown up from the deep, old forms of life vanish, new ones appear. And, varied as are these revolutions, slow as is the course of things throughout, there is no need of hurry, the expectancy of time can wait, for time itself, and it only, is inexhaustible. Its wheels undergo no friction, they partake not of the wear and tear of the globes that they grind to dust, but survive all change, and they revolve at the same pace,

though every atom may at length have been employed in every possible relation throughout the universal system "

"But though change may proceed for ever, can it affect an individual who has died and is no more?" inquired I, "yet evident is it what must be your answer."

"It must affect us all, not only once, but periodically, through eternity. The finite universe, however great, cannot attain to an infinite variety of change, the hour must therefore come again when all things possible have been accomplished. And then all that has before been must recommence its solemn march."

For some moments I was silent. I had carefully followed Musonio through the outline of his system, and was astonished at the mathematical precision with which he arrived at results so incredible. He detected the difficulty which filled my mind, in common with that of the assembly—one which, no doubt, he once had experienced himself.

"You see the accuracy of my argument, but are unable to realise its fruits."

"Even so," said the member who had before taken part in the argument. "How can we conceive that this earth and all its productions will one day grow old no longer, but become young again, and once more pass through its early career? How can we suppose that it is again to be a globe of fire, which is to cool and vitrify, that the Alps are to be again children, that the extinct things of the lost ages are to re-occupy their olden abodes, to live again, that oblivion is once more to pass over their forms like an obliterating shadow? How are we to believe that our first parents are to be born and to sin again, that their descendants are once more to spread over the land and sea, that the hero is to fall in battle, that the philosopher and the poet are to reason and enjoy their triumphs again? And if all this is to be as it has been, we are to know it no more than we now recollect our ancient career of being!"

"A memory may be in type capable of this continuous recollection; we must not opine from the present, which appears far remote from the age of utmost wonders. But you cannot realise all this yet. To believe it myself was the work of years, the labour of constant meditation."

"Are we then," said I, "to meet our parents again on earth?"

"In every character, every form of good and evil, and finally as they were in this present epoch."

"Is there to be another sacrifice—a death and resurrection—merely for the hope of man?"

"Ay, and even as a new earth, so shall a new heaven succeed when the old has passed away." Thus doth the mighty cycle contain all, restore all, and sweep away all!"

"The sublimity of the doctrine," said I, "sufficeth not to conceal the painful consequences which its reality would entail: the vain sorrow, the unrequited love——"

"Fear not, my son," said Musonio, "there is hope even in this philosophy, hope worthy of an immortal soul, of a child of the truest God. Only think, that before any one complete cycle can have run, your own intelligence must have been in union with every form of being that is compatible with organic laws. The heights and depths of space will be opened to you, the distant worlds will receive you, you will be detained in each for a period little short of an eternity to mortal computation, and

will converse with the spirits of them all. What knowledge, what experience, may they not reveal in the midst of new celestial scenes? Now the day is but as an hour's duration, the night equal, in the midst of the most beautiful worlds, rising and setting too rapidly and gloriously to conceive of, and now no day, but a perpetual starlight, seen for ages as from a triumphal car on its way into some remote constellation. You will thus know all things in succession, losing sight of one series, obtaining it of another, an omniscience will pass through your undying soul, and you will ever, as at this hour, enjoy portions of its elevating power."

"But the slightest fallacy in your premises would destroy all these hopes which your philosophy holds out."

"I have submitted those premises to every test. They have been placed before the most unerring mathematicians, and accepted as possible, nay certain, if there be no Divine interference. The moralist sees in my system only justice dealt out to all the universe alike, the pious perceive in its consequences nothing but cause for gratitude and awe. Even the miserable are reconciled to their lot by its provisions, which declare that their degree of happiness is as great in the course of time as that of the rest, though not co-existent with it."

"But when we die there is surely a period of repose, how long is that to last according to these doctrines?"

"It may last for any length of time short of the everlasting."

"But that is as bad as death itself."

"Not so, for this temporary sleep is unconscious of time, and is therefore less than momentary, but the actual existence is restored, subject to endless repetitions, and is therefore equal to an immortality, with unconscious intervals of sleep."

"You mete out time and space with a wide grasp, and you yet appear consistent in all you say on a subject so awful. How, let me ask, is the soul to pass through the universe, as you propose, and in process of time to behold all?"

"The destiny of the soul," answered Musonio, "ever has been, and will be, associated with matter. It can travel from sphere to sphere only by aid of attraction, that first law, which blends and again crumbles up the mightiest system. Think you, O son of light, that the nebular mist which seems like the breath of the Almighty, condensed as it issues forth is really new?—no more than the fumes which issue from the sun. It may have returned to the infancy of its existence, be pure as of old, be ready to flow into the bosom of some breathing star, or to nourish the spirit of those plains which, silent and remote, inspire a sense of music afar off, heard only as love is felt, or mercy, as it touches the heart, but it is not, was never new."

"But, my dear father," I concluded, "may not the laws, as in the logarithm, alter unexpectedly in the advance in their mysterious work? May not perfection whenever arrived at present that strength of union among its parts that no new affinities can dis sever? In other words, may not man, once made perfect, continue to be so ever after?"

"Had that been possible, it would have happened long ago, it would have constituted the original, the unalterable condition, not been the work of nature. But the spirit of nature is change."

The company, after lingering for some hours around the philosopher, at last separated with regret. The discourse left upon my mind a feeling

indefinite in character, which carried me back to a seemingly former state of being. Was the early past, or was it not a profound blank? Was the future to be indicated to us by a prospective—the past by a pre-existent sympathy? Was all to be revealed through science, even heaven itself? Or, after all, since eternity has so many heirs, was the present the just portion of each?

This philosophy of Musonio, mighty as was the thought it asserted, taught us no moral consequences, at least not in the sum of things, whatever our conduct might be, but it was a grateful doctrine to one like myself, who at that moment was not unwilling to let injustice have its course. I confess that I felt unequal to my duty, that of rendering up my secret, and bringing the wicked to judgment, in doing so I must have involved the happiness of the innocent in the ruin of the guilty. There was one unsuspecting creature, my sister, whose look of blighted joy I could not have met, I must accordingly endure the penalty of my own infirmity, at the mercy of my Maker, rather than stand forward, and, with fatal evidence, cast a blight over the prospects of that happy being. Why should I not suffer in conscience, for however long a term, if it would save the guiltless? It was my fault that Moro had appeared on the stage at all, I had placed him in the way of the poniard. Let not his anger, then, fall on those who had injured him owing to my interference, but on me. It was a bad bargain to make with the laws of justice, but it was the best that my conscience would allow.

While these reflections were yet fresh within my mind, Mezzofonte entered the library to announce Piombino, for I had again reached home.

"I am glad to see you at Aula," I said, with feigned delight, "you have mounted the canvas, and the promised gold is due."

"No canvas can I mount, alas! no gold accept, until the wound of Moro heals," I lament to say the sore is eating into the core of his once gay heart," replied Piombino.

"And what is to be done?"

"We must have recourse to justice."

"Impossible! Repeat not the proposal, unless you would quit my presence for ever."

Moro was silent.

"What evidence can be adduced?"

"Your own, Montecatino's, and mine."

"My evidence, say you? Who can penetrate what I have not dared to repeat within myself?"

"You are known to have aided me in tracking the associate of the murderer to the cavern, and the description Moro gives of the assassin agrees with the form and stature of him whom Thanatos walked with from the cave."

"O my God!" exclaimed I, "in our worldly pursuits we do best without seeking thee, but we are made to feel our neglect in an hour of need like this! If we then raise our thoughts to thee, our hearts are heavy, and remain below, so that we seek but follow not thy ways. In thy presence I see what my duty is, but am far too weak to fulfil it."

"You are distressed almost beyond the occasion, do you dread lest your secretary should prove a guilty party?"

"Leave me to consider the matter, at least for a few days, you shall then hear my decision."

The few days were over, my difficulty was the same it was easier to temporise than to decide aright. During this uncertainty a visitor was announced it was Montecatino. At first I resolved not to receive him, but on consideration thought it best to submit to an interview.

"This is a friendly visit," I said, "you are still solicitous about my health."

"I am," replied Montecatino, smiling, "but you look well, and probably have little occasion for assistance. Other business has aided in determining my presence here."

"You will remain a few days?"

"I return to-night."

"Let us have no business, the day is fine, we will walk, and then dine early."

"I had only to remark that I have strictly kept my promise of secrecy as to having overtaken your secretary on the road, on the day of Moro's untoward fate."

"What is to be done?"

"It appears that you and the painter have completed the chain of evidence against him, we should now see to his arrest."

I could have dropped on the floor, such was the agony I felt at this cool proposal—so fatal were the consequences that I foresaw. It was a crisis which none but a single-minded follower of truth could have met with honest purpose. As a child of fancy, the sensibility of my nature told me, like a telegraph upon the remotest confines of spirit, the worst that could happen—but, collecting my senses, I took time, before replying, to correct this aberration of my timid judgment by reference to ordinary standards, and replied:

"One can hardly suppose that Thanatos, or any one else, could really seek Moro's life, it must have been a mistake from first to last—a frolic of our Florentine youth, not intended to take a fatal turn."

"No mistake, I fear," said Montecatino, "the friends of Pallavicini, with perhaps the count himself, have been at the bottom of the affair."

"The count Pallavicini?"

"I do not know, but if such be your suspicion, as it is mine, your best plan is to quit Tuscany for a short time, and take Thanatos with you."

"There is some pleasure in talking to a man of sense. Have you seen Moro lately?"

"He sent me to you. Poor fellow! I could not refuse to come, for his life hangs upon the result of this affair."

"Can you not keep him quiet?"

"No, he is one of the innocents, unused to the ways of life, and his good heart is so shocked at the cruel injustice of his enemies, that he does not recover his health."

"Be kind to him, give him no hope of revenge, but every promise of advancement."

"And I have a letter for you from the old Countess of Strozzi, who is my patient."

When Montecatino had left, I perused the letter—it was to make me acquainted with the marriage of Melissa to the Duke of Valisneri, and to transmit me a message from the Marchioness of Ferrini inviting me to Siena once more.

I was fully alive to the horrors of my situation. Curiosity to learn

the truth, coupled with a desire to see Moro avenged, had led to the acquisition of a secret, to keep which would render me unworthy of life, while to disclose it must conduce to the ruin of the one nearest to me on earth, for Orazio had hired the assassin Scoronconcolo, and when his suit was safe had sent Thanatos to arrest the blow

I allowed days to glide away in inactivity, but my irresolution was brought to a sudden end by an unlooked for event

I was by the window, when an object presented itself to my view too trying to endure I shouted to Mezzofonte for the horses

"Get horses ready without delay," I said, "and let Thanatos be summoned"

The horses stood ready at the gate, and Thanatos was shortly in my presence I confronted him with looks of despair

"The ghastly visage of Moro is to be seen!" I said, "his figure approaches slowly along the avenue Come to the window! look out! He leans forward on his saddle, and pants for breath! Now he alights, and sinks back against a tree! I have no longer fortitude to bear the terrors which the sight has for me, it strikes to the root of my being, it plunges deeper than the springs of pity! Has the sight no terrors for you? Let us then prepare, like cowards, for rapid flight! The blood of the half slain man leaves him no peace of mind, it was wantonly shed, and it haunts him like the faint mist which comes up from a grave prematurely dug Yes! its shade clings to his eyeballs, and tortures his soul with thirst for others blood The creeping fiend of vengeance has instilled poison into his heart Let us away!"

I hurried down the stairs, followed by the agitated criminal, whose knees shook under him In a few seconds more we were mounted, our horses in a full gallop on the Siena road

"I am to look on the bride, then, to-day! Had she behaved more feelingly, I should now have been at peace To her conduct do I trace my misfortunes To indulge in an unamiable pride, she has thrown me into the rugged pass, and I know not what I may find on the other side"

Such were my thoughts, and they repeated themselves in muffled silence during the hours of my flight from home

CHAPTER XIII

WOE unto the works of God!

O, woman, the beautiful, the beloved! for yet how long a time is destiny, through thee, to people the unvisited Far with souls!

There is one besides thee who suffers for love—your Redeemer! And not he alone, but yet another

Lift up your torch, ye pure of mind! Are we not all your children? Shall we not follow?

She told me of her love I returned not her passion, but told her what I had suffered for the love of another

See ye this, my children? Yet where are ye now? Gone into the hollow earth! See ye this weapon? It is rusty and old, but the name engraved at its point is still legible For the love of her whose name it is, I, too, could once have perished on the cross

Then why did one else love the unhappy, the worn-out heart? Was

it to be? Was she also to suffer? Sorrow is the offspring of sorrow, its motto, "I can never forget"

Look upward, my children, and regard the heavens! And yet, where are ye now? But one only of our race is left to suffer

Look out from the hollow earth, and regard me Listen to my voice, that ye may learn what retribution is, observe, that ye may know how deep must be humility It is only in youth that we can enjoy wickedness, the victory is declared against us in our old age Those who repent not in health, are subdued by sickness, and feeble is the last struggle of the hardened heart

Hark! I am among voices of the past, my soul is in the chorus They laugh and chatter like those who were young of old, yet, when I listen, a silence rushes at my ear A chord of memory, is it? Then what I have indited is the wandering of a troubled brain, let it be as a record of what I am

I resume, after a lapse, the thread of my narrative

I reached Siena, and saw them all again The party was a fragment of what I had once seen there, and better was it to be left so The mosaic of human things falls to pieces, supply not the places of those who are gone The family, however, still held together, and Giuditte was there as at first, the youngest of the Piccolomini

If there lived a being more pure and beautiful than the rest of women, it was Giuditte! There was a lightness in her form belonging to the spirit, her complexion was alabaster shaped to thought, and tinged with the blush of innocency Her blue eyes seemed to have imbibed the mellowness of the sky, but to yield it a softer light than its own, while between every limb and feature there was an indefinable harmony of which we vainly seek the centre, lost in a labyrinth of beauty!

In how many does it happen that the outward charms are so perfect as to eclipse even the intellect within The messengers of creation are often like the sculptor, they neglect not a feature's shade, but slumber over their inward work, so difficult is it to fashion the soul They know how to endow with virtue the most pure, to ornament with gifts, as well as to impose over the whole mind a gentle imagination But there is a force wanting, and superstition is allowed to creep in as an invisible parasite, this grows slowly, entwines itself about the true faculties, and, sapping them, checks their further growth, and at length dominates over the simple fields of thought

Giuditte was superstitious, and yet how good! There was a pausing gentleness in her opinions more ravishing to the lover than unfettered thought, and a cultivation so varied as to exceed all natural attainments Such was the control she had over herself, emotion had of late been to her as the element of a different sphere, she had banished it from a sense of duty, and become in consequence calm and hopeful as the future There was a sweet expression in her face due solely to harmony of feature, such as might hang upon the lips while the mind sleeps, but so prolific was the brightness of her nature, that one ray of intellect would give her countenance the aspect of solid light

Her figure was tall and erect, her movements almost haughty, as if the frame itself were conscious of symmetry and grace She moved upon the earth in all the majesty of a wave upon the waters—dimpled,

ever-changing, unlike all besides, the world and its beauties subdued for a moment into the scenery on which she trod

And Melissa was married, she had become the Duchess of Valisneri! We met cheerfully, she too happy to feign sadness, I too miserable not to appear gay. Her mother was the same, she received me with affection, the maternal tie unruptured between us, though her child had bounded from my arms

My father's last hope was to meet her in heaven. He died wifeless, she a widow, their union might almost have commenced on earth. But the self control which, as I firmly believed, had saved him and her in early life stepped in, he knew that his love had put limits to his life,—why should he make the object of such love a mourner? She would weep enough in secret when he died, let her not witness his end! How beautiful, too, was that love,—how incorporeal. He had seen her in loveliness, and resisted an affection which proved mutual. He still desired to be with her in her age, though toothless and wrinkled, he would have idolised her as he had done in youth. Her spirit was the same spirit that made her young voice thrill, her young eye brighten—the same that caused her youthful breast to sigh. It was the same spirit that could not sleep for love, the same that resisted every temptation because it loved with humility. It was the spirit that had suffered for him all these years—the spirit he had cherished so long, that he had sculptured from faithful remembrance, and that had haunted the delirious remains of his reason to the dying hour. I went and beheld her, she pressed me like a child to her embrace, the conjunction of two desolate beings. In Dione the beautiful look remained, there was no decay. Virtue, and love, and sadness, will often embalm the countenance in her who cares not to preserve her charms.

Melissa was more changed than Dione. As the duke, her husband, was not with her, I was often by her side as formerly. After some days we got accustomed to each other, laughed sometimes, and talked much. We made casual allusions to the past, not expressive of all its eventful story, yet sometimes, as by way of moral experiment, sounding its deepest parts. My heart was full of woe, but I concealed it, and encouraged Melissa to address herself to former times. She became interested afresh in my welfare, and aspired even thus late to make me happy.

In the city of Siena still lives the family of Piccolomini, among the members of which she had one dear friend, still unmarried, named Giuditta! I had not long been at Siena before I found that this beautiful young person was an inmate, once more, of the same mansion with myself, and I soon discovered beyond a doubt that it was Melissa's wish to see us attached to each other. I could have loved Giuditta, had she not been Melissa's friend. She was her second self, through her, but destitute of the fatal chances of such an act, Melissa would love me once more. She knew the happiness which I was capable of sharing with an object worthy of my attachment, she wished the object to be one with whom she could feel. She had forfeited my passion herself, but now, with a deviation from what is right, perceptible to platonic minds, she was anxious to engage me in the love of one whom she loved, and thus to unite herself to me within another.

I had been once bitterly disappointed, yet sometimes would a feeling

awaken within me in favour of that fine form and noble spirit that Melissa had placed at the disposal of my affections. Across the dark yet tranquil weather of a soul still sick, the lightning of desire would flash, and for an instant declare the heavens. And these were glimpses of bliss, not new yet grateful, not selfish, for they vanished as they came.

Giuditta was not insensible to hopes entertained by her relation, and in the simplicity of her nature gave them credence. She would now retire to rest with her fancy steeped in the colours of sunset, the hope emblazoned and displayed within her dream, the hope of the morrow, to awake at morn and see the mountain tops, which the evening before were azured and gilded in the twilight, become an outline and surface of snow. Such was the shifting scenery of love on which her constancy would seek repose. But the climate of my soul was changeable, like that of my native land, and not, at any time, to be rendered ever-bright by love. My blighted hopes, instead of reviving under Giuditta's smile, were but opened like the rarer plants which spread their leaves in winter only to be silvered by the frost.

When she saw me moved, which I was at times, partly by the sight of her affection, and in part by the remembrance of my own, she would gaze on me too long, and change into dislike the little love I knew. I have then turned away, my expression has altered, I have struggled as with a fiend, and that to merely disguise my lips with a smile. Yet often would a momentary impulse dispose me to melt before that sun of beauty, and rejoice in the light which issued from those blue eyes. But the warm emotion has unfailingly returned in suicidal terror to its source, and perished on the confines of the heart.

To prove to myself the true nature of my feelings, for could I have loved her I would have yielded, I have received Giuditta in my arms and embraced her, but it has been with unpassioned caresses. For, while all this was passing, it was not Giuditta's soul that seemed present with me. It was Melissa with whom I had the new battle of love to fight, for it was she who had invoked my affection afresh. Her own heart was occupied with another, but she offered me the heart of her friend, in which we might meet and be unlawfully united.

She would sacrifice her friend to the man whom she had rejected, she would place the humble and meek in the hands of him whom she found unbending, she would give her innocent companion who had never loved, to him whose love she had driven from her to wander alone through life like a spirit of heaven, accursed undeservedly, and fated to carry within it the thoughts of bliss, yet never to attain the delights

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TO CORRESPONDENTS

Mr AINSWORTH begs it to be distinctly understood that no Contributions what ever sent him, either for the NEW MONTHLY or AINSWORTH'S MAGAZINE will be returned All articles are sent at the risk of the writers, who should invariably keep copies



THE LANCASHIRE WITCHES;

A Romance of Pendle Forest

BY W HARRISON AINSWORTH, ESQ

CHAPTER VIII

THE EXECUTIONER

HALF-AN-HOUR after this, two of the arquebussiers returned with Hal o' Nabs, whom they had succeeded in capturing, after a desperate resistance, about a mile from the abbey, on the road to Wiswall. He was taken to the guard-room, which had been appointed in one of the lower chambers of the chapter-house, and Demdike was immediately apprised of his arrival. Satisfied by an inspection of the prisoner, whose demeanour was sullen and resolved, Demdike proceeded to the great hall, where the Earl of Derby, who had returned thither after the midnight mass, was still sitting with his retainers. An audience was readily obtained by the wizard, and, apparently well pleased with the result, he returned to the guard-room. The prisoner was seated by himself in one corner of the chamber, with his hands tied behind his back with a leathern thong, and Demdike approaching him told him that for having aided the escape of a condemned rebel and traitor, and violently assaulting the king's lieges in the execution of their duty, he would be hanged on the morrow, the Earl of Derby, who had power of life or death in such cases, having so decreed it. And he exhibited the warrant.

"Soh, yo mean to hong me, eh, wizard?" cried Hal o' Nabs, kicking his heels with great apparent indifference.

"I do," replied Demdike, "if for nothing else, for slaying my hound."

"Ey dunna think it," replied Hal. "Yo'n alter your mound. Do mon. Ey'm nah prepared to dee just yet."

"Then perish in your sins," cried Demdike, "I will not give you an hour's respite."

"Yo'n be sorry when it's too late," said Hal.

"Tush!" cried Demdike, "my only regret will be that Uriel's slaughter is paid for by such a worthless life as thine."

"Then whoy tak' it?" demanded Hal. "'Specially whon yo'n lose your chult by doing so."

"My child!" exclaimed Demdike, surprised. "How mean you, surrah?"

"Ey mean this," replied Hal, coolly, "that if ey dee to-morrow mornin', your chilt dees too. Whon ey undertook this job ey calkilated mey chances, an' tuk precautions eforehond. Your chilt's a hostage fo mey safety."

"Curses on thee and thy cunning," cried Demdike, "but I will not be outwitted by a lund like thee. I will have the child, and yet not be baulked of my revenge."

"Yo n never ha it, except os a breathless corpse, 'bowt mey consent," rejoined Hal.

"We shall see," cried Demdike, rushing forth, and bidding the guards look well to the prisoner.

But ere long he returned with a gloomy and disappointed expression of countenance, and again approaching the prisoner, said, "Thou hast spoken the truth. The infant is in the hands of some innocent being over whom I have no power."

"Ly towdee so, wizard," replied Hal, laughing. "Hoind os ey be, ey'm a match fo' thee,—ha' ha' Neaw, mev life agen t' chilt's. Win yo set me free?"

Demdike deliberated.

"Harkee, wizard," cried Hal, "if yo re hatching treason ey'n dun T' sartunty o' revenge win sweeten mey last moments."

"Wi'll you swear to deliver the chilt to me, unharmed, if I set you free?" asked Demdike.

"It's a bargain, wizard," rejoined Hal o' Nabs. "ey swear. Boh yo mun set me free furst, fo' ey winnaw tak your word."

Demdike turned away disdainfully, and, addressing the arquebussiers, said, "You behold this wariant guard. The prisoner is committed to my custody. I will produce him on the morrow, or account for his absence to the Earl of Derby."

One of the arquebussiers examined the order, and vouching for its correctness, the others signified their assent to the arrangement, upon which Demdike motioned the prisoner to follow him, and quitted the chamber. No interruption was offered to Hal's egress, but he stopped within the court-yard, where Demdike awaited him, and unfastened the leathern thong that bound together his hands.

"Now go and bring the chilt to me," said the wizard.

"Nah, ey st neaw bring it ye myself," rejoined Hal. "Ey knoas better nor that. Be at t' church porch i half an hour, an' t' bantlin' shan be delivered to ye safe an' sound."

And without waiting for a reply, he ran off with great swiftness.

At the appointed time Demdike sought the church, and as he drew near it there issued from the porch a female, who hastily placing the child, wrapped in a mantle, in his arms, tarried for no speech from him, but instantly disappeared. Demdike, however, recognised in her the miller's daughter, Dorothy Croft.

Dawn came at last, after a long and weary night to many within and without the abbey. Everything betokened a dismal day. The atmosphere was damp, and oppressive to the spirits, while the raw cold sensibly affected the frame. All astir were filled with gloom and despondency, and secretly breathed a wish that the tragical business of the day were ended. The vast range of Pendle was obscured by clouds, and ere long the vapours descended into the valleys, and rain began to fall,

at first slightly, but afterwards in heavy continuous showers Melancholy was the aspect of the abbey, and it required no stretch of imagination to fancy that the old structure was deploring the fate of its former ruler To those impressed with the idea—and many there were who were so—the very stones of the convent church seemed dissolving into tears The statues of the saints appeared to weep, and the great statue of Saint Gregory de Northbury over the porch seemed bowed down with grief The grotesquely carved heads on the spouts grinned horribly at the abbot's destroyers, and spouted forth cascades of water as if with the intent of drowning them So deluging and incessant were the showers, that it seemed, indeed, as if the abbey would be flooded All the inequalities of ground within the great quadrangle of the cloisters looked like ponds, and the various water-spouts from the dormitory, the refectory, and the chapter-house, continuing to jet forth streams into the court below, the ambulatories were soon filled ankle-deep, and even the lower apartments, on which they opened, invaded

Surcharged with moisture, the royal banner on the gate drooped and clung to the staff, as if it, too, shared in the general depression, or as if the sovereign authority it represented had given way The countenances and deportment of the men harmonised with the weather, they moved about gloomily and despondently, their bright accoutrements sullied with the wet, and their buskins clogged with mire A forlorn sight—it was to watch the shivering sentinels on the walls, and yet more forlorn to see the groups of the abbot's old retainers gathering without, wrapped in their blue woollen cloaks, patiently enduring the drenching showers, and awaiting the last awful scene But the saddest sight of all was on the hill, already described, called the Hole-houses Here two other lesser gibbets had been erected during the night, one on either hand of the loftier instrument of justice, and the carpenters were yet employed in finishing their work, having been delayed by the badness of the weather Half drowned by the torrents that fell upon them, the poor fellows were protected from interference with their disagreeable occupation by half-a-dozen well-mounted and well-armed troopers, and by as many halberdiers, and this company, completely exposed to the weather, suffered severely from wet and cold The rain beat against the gallows, ran down its tall naked posts, and collected in pools at its feet Attracted by some strange instinct, which seemed to give them a knowledge of the object of these terrible preparations, two ravens wheeled screaming round the fatal tree, and at length one of them settled on the cross-beam, and could with difficulty be dislodged by the shouts of the men, when it flew away, croaking hoarsely Up this gentle hill, ordinarily so soft and beautiful, but now abhorrent as a Golgotha, in the eyes of the beholders, groups of rustics and monks had climbed over ground rendered slippery with moisture, and had gathered round the paling encircling the terrible apparatus, looking the images of despair and woe

Even those within the abbey, and sheltered from the storm, shared the all-pervading despondency The refectory looked dull and comfortless, and the logs on the hearth hissed and sputtered, and would not burn Green wood had been brought instead of dry fuel by the drowsy henchman The viands on the board provoked not the appetite, and the men emptied their cups of ale, yawned and stretched their arms, as if they would fain sleep an hour or two longer The sense of discomfort was

heightened by the entrance of those whose term of watch had been relieved, and who cast their dripping cloaks on the floor, while two or three savage dogs, steaming with moisture, stretched their huge lengths before the sullen fire, and disputed all approach to it

Within the great hall were already gathered the retainers of the Earl of Derby, but the nobleman himself had not appeared. Having passed the greater part of the night in conference with one person or another, and the abbot's flight having caused him much disquietude, though he did not hear of it till the fugitive was recovered, the earl would not seek his couch until within an hour of daybreak, and his attendants, considering the state of the weather, and that it yet wanted full two hours to the time appointed for the execution, did not think it needful to disturb him. Braddyll and Assheton, however, were up and ready, but despite their firmness of nerve, they yielded like the rest to the depressing influence of the weather, and began to have some misgivings as to their own share in the tragedy about to be enacted. The various gentlemen in attendance paced to and fro within the hall, holding but slight converse together, anxiously counting the minutes, for the time appeared to pass on with unwonted slowness, and ever and anon glancing through the diamond panes of the window at the rain pouring down steadily without, and coming back again hopeless of amendment in the weather.

If such were the disheartening influence of the day on those who had nothing to apprehend, what must its effect have been on the poor captives! Woeful indeed. The two monks suffered a complete prostration of spirit. All the resolution which Father Haydocke had displayed in his interview with the Earl of Derby failed him now, and he yielded to the agonies of despair. Father Eastgate was in little better condition, and gave vent to unavailing lamentations, instead of paying heed to the consolatory discourse of the monk who had been permitted to visit him.

The abbot was better sustained. Though greatly enfeebled by the occurrences of the night, yet in proportion as his bodily strength decreased, his mental energies rallied. Since the confession of his secret offence, and the conviction he had obtained that his supposed victim still lived, a weight seemed taken from his breast, and he had no longer any dread of death. Rather he looked to the speedy termination of existence with hopeful pleasure. He prepared himself as decently as the means afforded him permitted for his last appearance before the world, but refused all refreshment except a cup of water, and being left to himself, was praying fervently when a man was admitted into his cell. Thinking it might be the executioner come to summon him, he arose, and to his surprise beheld Hal o' Nabs. The countenance of the rustic was pale, but his bearing was determined.

"You here, my son," cried Paslew. "I hoped you had escaped."

"Ey'm i' nah dawnger, feayther abbot," replied Hal. "Ey'n gotten leef to visit ye fo a minute only, so ey mun be brief. May yourself easy, ye shanna dee be't hongmon's bonds."

"How, my son!" cried Paslew. "I understand you not."

"Yo'n onderstond me weel enough by-and-by," replied Hal. "Dungh be feart whon ye see me next, an comfort yoursel' that whatever cums and goes, your death shall be avenged o' your warst foe."

Paslew would have sought some further explanation, but Hal stepped

quickly backwards, and striking his foot against the door, it was instantly opened by the guard, and he went forth

Not long after this, the Earl of Derby entered the great hall, and his first inquiry was as to the safety of the prisoners. When satisfied of this, he looked forth, and shuddered at the dismal state of the weather. While he was addressing some remarks on this subject, and on its interference with the tragical exhibition about to take place, an officer entered the hall, followed by several persons of inferior condition, amongst whom was Hal o' Nabs, and marched up to the earl, while the others remained standing at a respectful distance.

"What news do you bring me, sir?" cried the earl, noticing the officer's evident uneasiness of manner. "Nothing hath happened to the prisoners? God's death! if it hath, you shall all answer for it with your bodies."

"Nothing hath happened to them, my lord," said the officer, "but——"

"But what?" interrupted the earl. "Out with it quickly!"

"The executioner from Lancaster and his two aids have fled," replied the officer.

"Fled!" exclaimed the earl, stamping his foot with rage, "now, as I live, this is a device to delay the execution till some new attempt at rescue can be made. But it shall fail, if I string up the abbot myself. Death! can no other hangmen be found? ha!"

"Of a surety, my lord, but all have an aversion to the office, and hold it opprobrious, especially to put churchmen to death," replied the officer.

"Opprobrious or not, it must be done," replied the earl. "See that fitting persons are provided."

At this moment Hal o' Nabs stepped forward.

"Ey'm willing to onderake t' job, my lort, an to hong t' abbut, without fee or rewort," he said.

"Thou bear'st him a grudge, I suppose, good fellow," replied the earl, laughing at the rustic's uncouth appearance, "but thou seem'st a stout fellow, and one not likely to flinch, and may discharge the office as well as another. If no better man can be found, let him do it," he added to the officer.

"Ey humbly thonk your lortship," replied Hal, inwardly rejoicing at the success of his scheme. But his countenance fell when he perceived Demdike advance from behind the others.

"This man is not to be trusted, my lord," said Demdike, coming forward, "he has some mischievous design in making the request. So far from bearing enmity to the abbot, it was he who assisted him in his attempt to escape last night."

"What!" exclaimed the earl, "is this a new trick? Bring the fellow forward, that I may examine him."

But Hal was gone. Instantly divining Demdike's purpose, and seeing his chance lost, he mingled with the lookers-on, who covered his retreat. Nor could he be found when sought for by the guard.

"See you provide a substitute quickly, sir," cried the earl, angrily, to the officer.

"It is needless to take further trouble, my lord," replied Demdike, "I am come to offer myself as executioner."

"Thou!" exclaimed the earl

"Ay," replied the other "When I heard that the men from Lancaster were fled, I instantly knew that some scheme to frustrate the ends of justice was on foot, and I at once resolved to undertake the office myself rather than delay or risk should occur. What this man's aim was, who hath just offered himself, I partly guess, but it hath failed, and if your lordship will intrust the matter to me, I will answer that no further impediment shall arise, but that the sentence shall be fully carried out, and the law satisfied. Your lordship can trust me."

"I know it," replied the earl "Be it as you will. It is now on the stroke of nine. At ten let all be in readiness to set out for Wiswall Hall. The rain may have ceased by that time, but no weather must stay you. Go forth with the new executioner, sir," he added to the officer, "and see all necessary preparations made."

And as Demdike bowed, and departed with the officer, the earl sat down with his retainers to break his fast.

CHAPTER IX

WISWALL HALL

SHORTLY before ten o'clock a numerous cortège, consisting of a troop of horse in their full equipments, a band of archers with their bows over their shoulders, and a long train of barefoot monks, who had been permitted to attend, set out from the abbey. Behind them came a varlet with a paper mitre on his head, and a latten crosier in his hand, covered with a surcoat, on which was emblazoned, but tinct and reversed, the arms of Paslew, argent, a fess between three mullets, sable, pierced of the field, a crescent for difference. After him came another varlet bearing a banner, on which was painted a grotesque figure in a half-military, half-monastic garb, representing the "Earl of Poverty," with this distich beneath it—

Priest and warrior—rich and poor
He shall be hanged at his own door

Next followed a tumbrel, drawn by two horses, in which sat the abbot alone, the two other prisoners being kept back for the present. Then came Demdike, in a leathern jerkin and blood-red hose, fitting closely to his sinewy limbs, and wrapped in a houppeland of the same colour as the hose, with a coil of rope round his neck. He walked between two ill-favoured personages habited in black, whom he had chosen as assistants. A band of halberdiers brought up the rear. The procession moved slowly along, the passing-bell tolling each minute, and a muffled drum sounding hollowly at intervals.

Shortly before the procession started the rain ceased, but the air felt damp and chill, and the roads were inundated. Passing out at the north-eastern gateway, the gloomy train skirted the south side of the convent church, and went on in the direction of the village of Whalley. When near the east end of the holy edifice, the abbot beheld two coffins borne along, and, on inquiry, learnt that they contained the bodies of Bess Demdike and Cuthbert Ashbead, who were about to be interred in the cemetery. At this moment his eye for the first time encountered that of his implacable foe, and he then discovered that he was to serve as his executioner. At first Paslew felt much trouble at this thought, but the

feeling quickly passed away. On reaching Whalley, every door was found closed, and every window shut, so that the spectacle was lost upon the inhabitants, and after a brief halt, the cavalcade set out for Wiswall Hall.

Sprung from an ancient family residing in the neighbourhood of Whalley, Abbot Paslew was the second son of Francis Paslew of Wiswall Hall, a great gloomy stone mansion, situated at the foot of the south-western side of Pendle Hill, where his brother Francis still resided. Of a cold and cautious character, Francis Paslew, second of the name, held aloof from the insurrection, and when his brother was arrested he wholly abandoned him. Still the owner of Wiswall had not altogether escaped suspicion, and it was probably as much with the view of degrading him as of adding to the abbot's punishment, that the latter was taken to the hall on the morning of his execution. Be this as it may, the cortege toiled thither through roads bad in the best of seasons, but now, since the heavy rain, scarcely passable, and it arrived there in about half an hour, and drew up on the broad green lawn. Window and door of the hall were closed, no smoke issued from the heavy pile of chimneys, and to all outward seeming the place was utterly deserted. In answer to inquiries, it appeared that Francis Paslew had departed for Northumberland on the previous day, taking all his household with him.

In earlier years a quarrel having occurred between the haughty abbot and the churlish Francis, the brothers rarely met, whence it chanced that John Paslew had seldom visited the place of his birth of late, though lying so near to the abbey, and, indeed, forming part of its ancient dependencies. It was sad to view it now, and yet the house, gloomy as it was, recalled seasons with which, though they might awaken regret, no guilty associations were connected. Dark was the hall, and desolate, but on the fine old trees around it the rooks were settling, and their loud cawings pleased him, and excited gentle emotions. For a few moments he grew young again, and forgot why he was there. Fondly surveying the house, the terraced garden, in which, as a boy, he had so often strayed, and the park beyond it, where he had chased the deer, his gaze rose to the cloudy heights of Pendle, springing immediately behind the mansion, and up which he had frequently climbed. The flood-gates of memory were opened at once, and a whole tide of long-buried feelings rushed upon his heart.

From this half-painful half-pleasurable retrospect he was aroused by the loud blast of a trumpet, thrice blown. A recapitulation of his offences, together with his sentence, was read by a herald, after which the reversed blazonry was fastened upon the door of the hall, just below a stone escutcheon, on which was carved the arms of the family, while the paper mitre was torn and trampled under foot, the lathen crossier broken in twain, and the scuril banner hacked in pieces.

While this degrading act was performed, a man in a miller's white garb, with the hood drawn over his face, forced his way towards the tumbrel, and while the attention of the guard was otherwise engaged, whispered in Paslew's ear,

"Ey han failed i' mey scheme, feayther abbut, boh rest assured ey'n avenge you. Demdike shan ha' mey Sheffield chivvittle i' his heart 'efore he's a day older."

"The wizard has a charm against steel, my son, and indeed is proof against all weapons forged by men," replied Paslew, who recognised the

voice of Hal o' Nabs, and hoped by this assertion to divert him from his purpose

"Ha' say yo so, feayther abbut?" cried Hal, "then ey'n reach him wi' summat sacred" And he disappeared

At this moment word was given to return, and in half an hour the cavalcade arrived at the abbey in the same order it had left it.

Though the rain had ceased, heavy clouds still hung overhead, threatening another deluge, and the aspect of the abbey remained gloomy as ever. The bell continued to toll, drums were beaten, and trumpets sounded from the outer and inner gateway, and from the three quadrangles. The cavalcade drew up in front of the great northern entrance, and its return being announced within, the two other captives were brought forth, each fastened upon a hurdle, harnessed to a stout horse. They looked dead already, so ghastly was the hue of their cheeks.

The abbot's turn came next. Another hurdle was brought forward, and Demdike advanced to the tumbrel. But Paslew recoiled from his touch, and sprang to the ground unaided. He was then laid on his back upon the hurdle, and his hands and feet were bound fast with ropes to the twisted timbers. While this painful task was roughly performed by the wizard's two ill-favoured assistants, the crowd of rustics who looked on murmured and exhibited such strong tokens of displeasure, that the guard thought it prudent to keep them off with their halberds. But when all was done, Demdike motioned to a man standing behind him, to advance, and the person who was wrapped in a russet cloak complied, drew forth an infant, and held it in such way that the abbot could see it. Paslew understood what was meant, but he uttered not a word. Demdike then knelt down beside him, as if ascertaining the security of the cords, and whispered in his ear—

"Recal thy malediction, and my dagger shall save thee from the last indignity."

"Never," replied Paslew, "the curse is irrevocable. But I would not recal it if I could. As I have said, thy child shall be a witch, and the mother of witches—but all shall be swept off—all."

"Hell's torments seize thee!" cried the wizard, furiously.

"Nay, thou hast done thy worst to me," rejoined Paslew, meekly, "thou canst not harm me beyond the grave. Look to thyself, for even as thou speakest, thy child is taken from thee."

And so it was. While Demdike knelt beside Paslew, a hand was put forth, and, before the man who had custody of the infant could prevent it, his little charge was snatched from him. This the abbot saw, though the wizard perceived it not. The latter instantly sprang to his feet.

"Where is the child?" he demanded of the fellow in the russet cloak.

"It was taken from me by yon tell man who is disappearing through the gateway," replied the other, in great trepidation.

"Ha! he here!" exclaimed Demdike, regarding the Dark Figure with a look of despair. "It is gone from me for ever!"

"Ay, for ever!" echoed the abbot, solemnly.

"But revenge is still left me—revenge!" cried Demdike, with an infuriated gesture.

"Then glut thyself with it speedily," replied the abbot, "for thy time here is short."

"I care not if it be," replied Demdike, "I shall live long enough if I survive thee."

CHAPTER X.

THE HOLEHOUSES

AT this moment the blast of a trumpet resounded from the gateway, and the Earl of Derby, with the sheriff on his right hand, and Assheton on the left, and mounted on a richly-caparisoned charger, rode forth. He was preceded by four javelin-men, and followed by two heralds in their tabards.

To doleful tolling of bells—to solemn music—to plaintive hymn chanted by monks—to roll of muffled drum at intervals—the sad cortège set forth. Loud cries from the bystanders marked its departure, and some of them followed it, but many turned away, unable to endure the sight of horror about to ensue. Amongst those who went on was Hal o' Nabs, but he took care to keep out of the way of the guard, though he was little likely to be recognised, owing to his disguise.

Despite the miserable state of the weather, a great multitude was assembled at the place of execution, and they watched the approaching cavalcade with moody curiosity. To prevent disturbance, arquebussiers were stationed in parties here and there, and a clear course for the cortège was preserved by two lines of halberdiers with crossed pikes. But notwithstanding this, much difficulty was experienced in mounting the hill. Rendered slippery by the wet, and yet more so by the trampling of the crowd, the road was so bad in places that the horses could scarcely drag the hurdles up it, and more than one delay occurred. The stoppages were always denounced by groans, yells, and hootings from the mob, and these, neither the menaces of the Earl of Derby, nor the active measures of the guard, could repress.

At length, however, the cavalcade reached its destination. Then the crowd struggled forward, and settled into a dense compact ring round the circular railing enclosing the place of execution, within which were drawn up the Earl of Derby, the sheriff, Assheton, and the principal gentlemen, together with Demdike and his assistants, the guard forming a circle three deep round them.

Paslew was first unloosed, and when he stood up, he found Father Smith, the late prior, beside him, and tenderly embraced him.

"Be of good courage, father abbot," said the prior, "a few moments, and you will be numbered with the just."

"My hope is in the infinite mercy of Heaven, father," replied Paslew, sighing deeply. "Pray for me at the last."

"Doubt it not," returned the prior, fervently. "I will pray for you now and ever."

Meanwhile, the bonds of the two other captives were unfastened, but they were found wholly unable to stand without support. A lofty ladder had been placed against the central scaffold, and on this Demdike, having cast off his houpeland, mounted and adjusted the rope. His tall gaunt figure fully displayed in his tight-fitting red garb made him look like a hideous scarecrow. His appearance was greeted by the mob with a perfect hurricane of indignant outcries and yells. But he heeded them not, but calmly pursued his task. Above him wheeled the two ravens, who had never quitted the place since daybreak, uttering their discordant cries.

When all was done, he descended a few steps, and taking a black hood from his girdle to place over the head of his victim, called out in a voice which had little human in its tone, "I wait for you, John Paslew"

"Are you ready, Paslew?" demanded the Earl of Derby

"I am, my lord," replied the abbot And embracing the prior for the last time, he added, "*Vale, carissime frater, in æternum vale! et Dominus tecum sit in ultionem inimicorum nostrorum!*"

"It is the king's pleasure that you say not a word in your justification to the mob, Paslew," observed the earl.

"I had no such intention, my lord," replied the abbot

"Then tarry no longer," said the earl, "if you need aid, you shall have it"

"I require none," replied Paslew, resolutely

With this he mounted the ladder, with as much firmness and dignity as if ascending the steps of a tribune

Hitherto, nothing but yells and angry outcries had stunned the ears of the lookers-on, and several missives had been hurled at Demdike, some of which took effect, though without occasioning him discomfiture, but when the abbot appeared above the heads of the guard, the tumult instantly subsided, and profound silence ensued Not a breath was drawn by the spectators The ravens alone continued their ominous croaking

Hal o' Nabs, who stood on the outskirts of the ring, saw thus far, but he could bear it no longer, and rushed down the hill Just as he reached the level ground, a culvern was fired from the gateway, and the next moment a loud wailing cry bursting from the mob told that the abbot was launched into eternity

Hal would not look back, but went slowly on, and presently afterwards other horrid sounds dinned in his ears, telling that all was over with the two other sufferers Sickened and faint, he leaned against a wall for support How long he continued thus, he knew not, but he heard the cavalcade coming down the hill, and saw the Earl of Derby and his attendants ride past Glancing towards the place of execution, Hal then perceived that the abbot had been cut down, and rousing himself he joined the crowd now rushing towards the gate, and ascertained that the body of Paslew was to be taken to the convent church, and deposited there till orders were to be given respecting its interment He learnt, also, that the removal of the corpse was intrusted to Demdike Fired by this intelligence, and suddenly conceiving a wild project of vengeance, founded upon what he had heard from the abbot of the wizard being proof against weapons forged by men, he hurried to the church, entered it, the door being thrown open, and rushing up to the gallery, contrived to get out through a window upon the top of the porch, where he secreted himself behind the great stone statue of Saint Gregory

The information he had obtained proved correct Ere long a mournful train approached the church, and a bier was set down before the porch A black hood covered the face of the dead, but the vestments showed that it was the body of Paslew

At the head of the bearers was Demdike, and when the body was set down he advanced towards it, and, removing the hood, gazed at the livid and distorted features

"At length I am fully avenged," he said

"And Abbot Paslew, also," cried a voice above him

Demdike looked up, but the look was his last, for the ponderous statue of Saint Gregory de Northbury, launched from its pedestal, fell upon his head, and crushed him to the ground. A mangled and breathless mass was taken from beneath the image, and the hands and visage of Paslew were found spotted with blood dashed from the gory carcase. The author of the wizard's destruction was suspected, but never found, nor was it positively known who had done the deed till years after, when Hal o' Nabs, who meanwhile had married pretty Dorothy Croft, and had been blessed by numerous offspring in the union, made his last confession, and then he exhibited no remarkable or becoming penitence for the act, neither was he refused absolution.

Thus it came to pass that the abbot and his enemy perished together. The mutilated remains of the wizard were placed in a shell, and huddled into the grave where his wife had that morning been laid. But no prayer was said over him. And the superstitious believed that the body was carried off that very night by the Fend, and taken to a witch's sabbath in the ruined tower on Runington Moor. Certain it was that the unhallowed grave was disturbed. The body of Paslew was decently interred in the north aisle of the parish church of Whalley beneath a stone with a Gothic cross sculptured upon it, and bearing the piteous inscription—
"Miserere mei"

But in the belief of the vulgar the abbot did not rest tranquilly. For many years afterwards a white-robed monastic figure was seen to flit along the cloisters, pass out at the gate, and disappear with a wailing cry over the Holehouses. And the same ghostly figure was often seen to glide through the corridor in the abbot's lodging, and vanish at the door of the chamber leading to the little oratory. Thus Whalley Abbey was supposed to be haunted, and few liked to wander through its deserted cloisters or ruined church after dark. The abbot's tragical end was thus recorded —

Johannes Paslew Capitale Affectus Supplicio

12^o Mensis Martii, 1537

As to the infant upon whom the abbot's malediction fell, it was reserved for the dark destinies shadowed forth in the dread anathema he had uttered to the development of which the tragic drama about to follow is devoted, and to which the fate of Abbot Paslew forms a necessary and fitting prologue. Thus far the veil of the Future may be drawn aside. That infant and her progeny became the LANCASHIRE WITCHES.

THE FREISCHARLER AND HIS GUN *

(VOLKS LIED)

BY CAROLINE DE CRESPIGNY

FREISCHARLER

"THEY never shall possess thee,
Till cold this hand in death,
And patriot peans bless thee,
And Victory's laurels wreath "

GUN

"Why dost so firmly clench me,
My trusty friend, and tried?"

FREISCHARLER

"Alas! and they would wrench me
From thy protecting side "

GUN

"Thinkest thou they wish to have
me
With this old form I wear?"

FREISCHARLER

"I well know why they crave thee,
'Tis not from love—but fear
"Thou art a freeman's treasure,—
Hope—comfort—joy—delight,
I prize thee beyond measure—"

GUN

"Then clasp me day and night "

FREISCHARLER

"Thy voice to me is dearer,
Thy jug-jug on my ear,
Sounds musically clearer
Than nightingales to hear

"Ah! sinks my roof-tree under!
They waste with sword and
flame,"

GUN

"But I reply in thunder,
With thine unerring aim "

FREISCHARLER

"Hark! peals on peals are ringing,
My brothers round me fall,"

GUN

"But I to tyrants winging,
A death in every ball "

FREISCHARLER

"Soon victory's wreath shall bind
thee—

What presage this of ill?
My eyes grow dim,—"

GUN

"Then wind me)
Still closer—closer still "

FREISCHARLER

"Amid the dead and dying,
On liberty's battle-field,
Together now we're lying,—"

GUN

"Brave patriot! never yield."

FREISCHARLER

"No hireling slave shall hold thee,
With life we will not part "

GUN

"Then like a bride enfold me,
And press me to your heart

"Now let the foe possess me,
Thou sleepest cold in death,
But freedom's sons shall bless thee,
Their tears be my best wreath "

* See "Swert Lied," or, Sword Song, by Korner

RATTLIN THE REEFER'S DREAM

A TOUGH BUT TRUE YARN

BY ONE OF RATTLIN'S OLD SHIPMATES

It was about the middle of August, 18— that the *Old Lucifer* was cruising in the Monar Passage, a strait about forty miles wide, which separates the eastern end of St Domingo from the island of Porto Rico. I was "middy" of the morning watch; it had been dead calm all night, but the gentle trade-wind was rising with the rising sun, and morning was glorious with the magic gilding of a tropical sky. Some time after eight bells,* when Ned Rattlin, who was never very punctual or methodical in any of his movements, came on deck to relieve me, and I was about to hurry down to my breakfast of warm skillogalee, or, as our old French negro, who served as midshipmen's steward and maid-of-all-work, with true French tact for murdering the king's English, called it, 'giggeragee,' Ralph seized me by the collar of my jacket, crying,

'Avast! Careless, my boy, you really must not make sail for the cockpit till you have heard the horrid dream which I had last night—or this morning, for I dreamt it twice over, and cannot get it out of my head. I must tell it to some one, and you are the only one that I dare tell it to, I should be so confoundedly laughed at by the *serum pocus* of the cockpit, but you and I know each other, and have some pursuits and feelings in common. We have our day-dreams and our night-dreams, and we know that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in the philosophy of a midshipman's berth.'

Now, had not Ralph seized hold of me by the lapel of my jacket, as before said, I should certainly have cut and run, for a reefer of sixteen, who is just relieved from the morning-watch, which he has kept for four hours, from four o'clock in the morning, and who has taken a cold bath in the wash-deck tub, is not likely to be in a humour to let his breakfast of cocoa or skillogalee grow cold. But, with the powerful grip of Ralph's shoulder-of-mutton fist on my collar, there was no chance of escape without tearing my jacket from clue to earring, which I felt that I could not afford to do, for, as I have before remarked, Ralph Rattlin was my senior by two years at least, and overtopped me in height by a foot, or something near it. I therefore made a virtue of necessity, and said,

"Well, Jemmy, if you'll promise not to keep me long, and allow me, first, to run down below and tell old Dom to keep my burgoo† warm, I'll return and hear your wonderful dream, though I fancy it's all gammon, and only manufactured to try the capacity of my swallow, because you know that, like yourself, I have a bit of hankering after the marvellous, and, as the negro Methodist said of the prophet Jonah, am 'a tellible

* Time is regulated on board a king's ship by a half hour glass, which is placed in the binnacle, in charge of the quartermaster of the watch on deck, and who, when he turns the glass, passes the word forward to strike the bell, which, in a man of war, is hung to the main bits, just over the main hatchway, and where it is consequently heard with facility all over the ship.

† Burgoo, or skillogalee, is the sea term for what in Scotland is called "parritch," and in Ireland "strabout," namely, oatmeal boiled in water.

fellow for fish,' though I doubt whether, like him, I could quite swallow a whale "

" Well, then, make sail, you little flibbertigibbet, and make haste back, that's a good fellow "

The above elegant soubriquet he generally favoured me with, when, in Yankee parlance, I had "ryled" him and got his "dander up," as was always the case when he was called Jimmy Caster, he being but too conscious that his long loose figure and shambling gait bore, at that time, no small resemblance to those of a waister of that name, though he afterwards became a remarkably fine, handsome man, bearing a striking resemblance, not without sufficient reason, to King George the Fourth.

In a few minutes I had made arrangements with old Dominique for the safe custody of my breakfast, and was again pacing the lee side of the quarter-deck, by the side of my gigantic messmate.

" And now, my dear Careless, said he, with unusual gravity, "if you can be serious for a few minutes, I will relate to you this infernal dream, which so preys upon my spirits that I do not feel like myself this morning, and must unburden my mind. I dreamt, then, that I was on the second dog-watch, as you know I shall be this evening, it was between seven and eight bells, the night pitch-dark, with the wind blowing fresh from the north east, the ship under double-reefed topsails, and foresail close hauled on the starboard tack, running at the rate of five knots, as I had found upon heaving the log. Suddenly the sea became like one sheet of flame, its appearance was awfully grand, the head of every wave, as it curled over and broke, diffused itself in broad streaks and flashes of blue and white flame, and I involuntarily repeated to myself the two lines of that singular, soul-freezing rhapsody, the 'Ancient Mariner,' which, though descriptive of a very different state of the ocean from that now presented to my imagination, I felt to be most applicable to what I saw before me—

The water, like a witch's oils,
Burnt green, and blue, and white

and then, referring to the two preceding lines of the stanza—

About, about, in reel and rout,
The death-fires danced at night

For that strangely wild and beautiful poem had taken a powerful hold on my sleeping fancy. I asked myself, with a shudder, Can there be 'death-fires?' And it seemed that the question, uttered half-aloud, had no sooner passed my lips, than it received its answer in a most strange and fearful manner, for a voice, like no human voice that I ever yet heard, shrieked out, in a tone of horror and distress, that made my blood run cold, 'Ship a-hoy—ship a-hoy!' I turned towards the lee quarter, whence the voice came, and, jumping on a carronade-slide, I saw the body of a man appearing out of the sea, from the waist upwards, of gigantic size, and of most forbidding—and at the same time woeful—countenance. His body appeared covered with scales, like that of a fish, which reflected the ghastly phosphoric light of the waters in radiating hues of green and gold, and purple and violet. His ample jaws, which opened from ear to ear, and which were furnished with a triple row of saw-shaped teeth, like those of a shark, were fringed with a thick curled beard and moustache, of

pale sea-green, which fell in wavy masses, mingling with long elf-locks of the same sickly hue, over his broad breast and shoulders, his deep sunk eyes flashed out with a strange unearthly light from beneath thick, overhanging eyebrows of that self-same sea-green hue, and his head was surrounded and surmounted with a waving diadem of 'green, and blue, and white' flames, flashing upwards, and radiating sideways, and curling over their waving tops, so as to ape the exact form of ostrich feathers. Awful as the figure was, and though it made my flesh creep, yet, dreaming as I was, I felt conscious that there was something of the ridiculous attached to the *bizarriere* of its appearance. You know my vein, Careless, and will give me credit for a true exposition of my feelings, when I tell you that, though in a most awful funk, I could not help adopting the words of *Trinculo*, and asking myself, half aloud,

What have we here—a man or a fish?

I had not, till that moment, noticed the quartermaster of the watch, a fine old weather-beaten seaman, who stood close to my side, and was, like myself, attentively watching the movements of the strange demon-like merman, who continued to follow the ship within a few fathoms of the lee quarter-galley, with a continual bowing or nodding motion of the head, which caused his plumes of livid flame to flash and corruscate, so that, to my eyes, they appeared to assume various forms of terror, as of 'fiery flying serpents' entwining his temples and thence shooting upwards, lussing and protruding their forked tongues, and lashing the air with their wings and tails of flame, and then, again, they subsided as before into the form of gracefully-curling ostrich-plumes, meanwhile he kept opening his terrific jaws, from which issued a thin blue luminous vapour, as if in act to speak, but uttered no audible sound, except that every now and then he would wring his huge hands, which appeared to be webbed to the second joint of the fingers, like the feet of a water-fowl, and furnished with long, crooked nails like an eagle's claws, and utter a wailing shriek, so like the cry of a drowning man, that it nearly drove me mad to hear it, and seemed to freeze my very blood in my veins. Whether old Bitts, the quartermaster, had really heard me quote the words of *Trinculo*, or whether, as all things seem to work by supernatural influences in dreams, he had defined my question by intuition, I know not, but he answered me at once

"No, sir, believe an old sailor that 'ere critter is neither man nor fish, it is somebody far more terrible-like, and one that few living sailors have ever set eyes on though, mayhap, I may have seen him before, mayhap, d'ye see, I can't tell when nor where, nor whether it were sleeping or waking, howsomever, be that as it will, I knows him well enough, for sure that 'ere's old Davy himself—old Davy Jones—he's come for some poor fellow's soul on board this here ship, and if you wants to get rid of him, you'd better go down at once, and call the captain up, that he may tell him to take what he wants and be off, for, till that's done, he'll keep alongside the ship, and if he's kept too long waiting, there's no saying but he may send a hurricane which may sweep the *Old Lucifer*, and all her officers and crew, away down into his locker."

"This hint was no sooner given, than I thought I went down into the captain's cabin, where I found Captain Dure seated at the cabin-table, just

under the swinging lamp, as pale as death, and trembling from head to foot like an aspen-leaf

" 'Please, sir,' I said, touching my hat, as in duty bound, 'Davy Jones has come alongside, and is waiting for somebody's soul, will you please to come on deck, and tell him to take what he wants?'

" 'I know it,' said the captain, who seemed utterly unnerved with terror, while the presence of the unearthly visitant seemed to

— harrow up his soul, freeze his young blood,
Make his two eyes like stars, start from their spheres,
His knotted and combined locks to part,
And each particular hair to stand on end
Like quills upon the fretful porcupine

" 'I had a glimpse of him,' continued he, 'out of the quarter-gallery window, and that's enough for me. Let the officer of the watch, or the first lieutenant, tell him to take what he wants, and get rid of him.'

"Now, it seemed to me in my dream that I was dreadfully annoyed at the conduct of the captain in shrinking in such a dastardly manner from his duty, for, from the moment that Bitts had informed me who the stranger was and what he required, I had gone down and reported his advent to the skipper, with as much coolness and unconcern as I should have done the coming alongside of the admiral or any other great personage, and all my terror seemed, for the time, to have vanished as soon as the strange vision became connected with matters of routine or ship's duty. I, therefore, addressed the captain again, as it seemed to me in a tone more authoritative than respectful. 'But, sir, you must come on deck, for old Bill Bitts says that Davy Jones will hearken to nobody but the captain or commander of a ship for the time being, and he knows Davy of old, and says, that if you don't come up on deck soon and let him go, the old fellow will send a hurricane that will blow the *Old Lucifer* out of the water, and that we shall find ourselves all men and officers, down in Davy Jones's locker before you can say Jack Robinson. And I can tell you, sir, that the sky looks very ugly to windward.'

" 'Well, Ralph, my boy' said the captain, apparently quite convinced by my eloquent speech, which seemed to go down capitally in my dream, though I guess I should soon be looking out for squalls at the main top-gallant-mast head, if I were to venture to address such a cavalier language to the skipper in waking earnest. 'Well, Ralph, my boy' give me your arm, and we'll go on deck, and give old Davy his due, since it must be so.' And with my assistance the captain mounted the companion-ladder, still trembling in every limb.

"As soon as we came on deck, I led him over to the lee side of the quarter-deck, and begged him to mount the carronade slide, and give his unwelcome visitor the *cong  d'eh, e*, for which he seemed waiting, still bowing his head, waving his fiery plumes, and mopping and mowing, and showing his treble row of teeth, as before. At the sight of the frightful demon, the captain seemed more dead than alive, and ready to fall from the gun-carriage, on which I was obliged to support him, he, however, plucked up courage to shriek out, in a voice that trembled with agitation, 'Whoever, or whatever, you are, take what you want, and begone,' and having said so, he sank powerless into my arms, upon which the creature

uttered one of its strange shrilling shrieks as of a drowning man, but which seemed mingled with a sort of shrill demoniac laughter, and disappeared below the waves—the waving plumes of his singular head-gear flashing up half-mast high as he sank out of sight. At the same moment, my eyes were somehow mysteriously directed from it, and I saw Jacob Fell, the forecastle-man, fall dead into the arms of one of his watch-mates, he, whom we call Cadaverous Jack, and whom you christened the Ancient Mariner, because you said he went about his duty looking so miserable, holding his head down on one side, as if he always felt the weight of the murdered albatross hanging about his neck. Immediately a heavy squall threw the ship on her beam-ends, and I awoke,”—which was the singular dream related to me by my quondam friend and shipmate, with a gravity quite unusual with him, except when he wanted to play upon the credulity of some of us youngsters, when he used to assume the gravest possible countenance, though I could always, in these cases, discern the lurking devil in his eyes. In this case, however, I could discover no such appearance of fun and frolic, his looks were, on the contrary, perfectly serious, and even allied to sadness, in spite of the bravado with which he had assumed his usual careless levity of manner in certain parts of his narration. I determined, however, not to let him have the laugh against me, and therefore said, “Come, come, Jemmy, you should tell that dream to the marines, the sailors can’t bolt it, it’s rather too tough. We all of us know that you are always dreaming, but you can’t catch old birds with such chaff. I am too old a sea-dog, and have sailed over too many leagues of blue water to bite at such gammon.” I prided myself much on being Ralph’s senior in the service by a couple of years or so, and felt indignant that he should think of treating me as a youngster, because he had about the same advantage of me in age. He, however, affirmed, in the most solemn manner, that it was an actual *bonâ-fide* dream, and that it had been reiterated on his falling asleep again, though in broken and disjointed patches, sometimes one part, sometimes another, of the previous vision being presented to his sleepy fancy, but there was always this horrible mefman, with his shark’s jaws and his flaming tiara, and poor Jacob Fell •lying dead in his messmate’s arms. But methinks I hear some nautical reader exclaim, “All stuff!” who ever heard of two reefers telling their dreams, and chattering on the sacred precincts of the quarter-deck of one of her Majesty’s frigates, like a guinea-pig and an embryo cadet on the quarter-deck of a Bengal trader? Pardon, my noble sea-kossifer, but you must remember that I have already told you that the *Old Lucifer* was not the crack frigate—not the *Eos*, six-and-thirty, but only a small frigate, and that, although she was blessed with a real martinet of a first-lieutenant, yet, in point of discipline, she was like most jackass frigates and sloops of war, *et hoc genus omne*, little better than a privateer, besides, our Portuguese supernumerary lieutenant was the officer of the watch, and Ralph had completely got the weather-gage of him, and could do what he liked with the “paviour.”* However, the dream was told me by Ralph nearly in the very words in which I have given it, though, perhaps, not all on deck, for the subject was renewed over our allowance of grog in the midshipmen’s berth after

* See “Rattlin the Reefer,” vol 1, *passim*

dinner, for nothing could drive it out of Rattlin's head, and he was all that day singularly silent and *distract* on all other subjects. That evening I had the first dog-watch, and when Rattlin came on deck at six o'clock to relieve me, the sun was setting in a red and angry-looking sky, and there was every symptom of a squally night.

"Well, Percy," he said, "this sunset reminds me of my dream. I really think old Davy will be among us before my watch is out."

"Very well, Jemmy, I'll come on deck at seven-bells and see," I replied, as I ran down the companion for an hour's snooze, for, as my nautical readers will be aware, I had the middle watch. Mindful of my promise, as soon as I heard seven-bells struck, I roused myself from the locker on which I had stretched myself and went on deck, and I was immediately struck with the perfect coincidence of the weather, and all the accessories to those described by Rattlin in his dream. The ship had just been put about, and was now close hauled on the starboard tack, the night pitch dark, the breeze freshening from the north-east, and the sea beginning to assume that luminous appearance so frequently observable under a dark sky and with a fresh breeze, but which though generally attributed to myriads of luminous animalculæ has never yet been fully and satisfactorily accounted for. I joined my friend Rattlin, and said to him, in a low tone, "This looks, indeed, like your dream."

"Yes," he answered, looking very pale and nervous, "it does, indeed. I don't know what to make of it. Davy Jones will certainly lay hold of some of us to-night."

At this moment the first-lieutenant came on deck, followed by the captain, whose sallow countenance, as he stood abaft the binnacle, and the light fell on his face, looked rather more ghastly than usual.

"I think, Mr Silva," said the former, addressing the officer of the watch, "we had better take another reef in the topsails, it looks very squally to windward, it's drawing near to eight bells, so we'll turn the hands up at once."

"Mr Rattlin," said Silva, "all hands reef topsails."

"Boatswain's-mate," bawled out Rattlin, going forward on to the weather gangway, "turn the hands up to reef topsails."

"Ay, ay, sir," and immediately his silver call was between his lips, and after blowing a shrill prelude, his hoarse voice was heard proclaiming, "All hands reef topsails, ahoy," which was re-echoed from the main-deck by the call and voice of the boatswain's-mate of the watch below, and, finally, by those of the boatswain himself, as the men came tumbling up the fore and main hatchways, and were soon seen scurrying up the rigging, or making the best of their way to their various stations. In less than five minutes the topsails were double-reefed, and the ship again dashing the spray from her bows. It being now so near the time for relieving the watch, the crew, with the exception of the idlers, all remained on deck, and the topmen scattered in groups about the gangways and fore-castle.

All at once the sky grew blacker than before, the breeze freshened, and the surface of the sea became like one sheet of pale blue and white flame.

"Now, Careless," whispered Rattlin, actually trembling with excitement, "my dream to the life!"

The words had scarcely passed his lips, when such a shriek as I never heard before or since seemed to come out of the very depths of the ocean, close under the ship's counter on the lee quarter. Every one rushed to the lee gangway, or jumped on the quarter-deck guns, to look in the direction from whence the sound came, but nothing could be seen. Once more that doleful cry arose, and it seemed now rather more distant from the ship, and then it ceased for ever.

"A man overboard!" cried the first-lieutenant, who seemed the first to recover his senses, seizing a grating of the companion-hatchway, and flinging it over the lee-bulwark, while the lieutenant of the watch did the same with its fellow. "Down with helm, and heave her all aback—let go the lee braces—lay the main-topsail to the mast—square away the after-yards, my boys—lower the jolly-boat—jump into her some of ye, and cast off her fastenings."

This latter command had, however, been obeyed ere it was issued, for the captain of the mizen-top and myself had jumped into the boat, where we were soon joined by three other mizen-top-men, and had her all clear for lowering. Two other scamen stood with the boat's tackle-falls in their hands.

"Lower away," cried I, and down we went.

During her descent, I had shipped the rudder, and we were soon pulling away to leeward. In vain we pulled about for more than an hour in the short, tumbling sea, which scintillated as it broke around us, and shed a ghastly hue on our anxious countenances, while the

Llgh bght
Tull off in hoary flukes

from the blades of our oars at every dip as they rose again from the water. At length the stentorian voice of the first-lieutenant hailed us to come on board, and we gave up our hopeless search, bringing with us nothing but one of the gratings and the life-buoy, which had been thrown overboard to support the drowning man, had he been fortunate enough to lay hold on one or the other of them. Upon passing the word forward to inquire whether any of the ship's company were missing, it was found that Jacob Fell, the fore-castle-man, had not been seen since he had laid out with one of his watch-mates to stow the jib, which was hauled down when the top-sails were reefed, the other man had left him out on the jib-boom, whence he must have fallen overboard, and it was supposed, from his thrilling and unearthly shriek, that he had been seized by a shark, as that part of the Caribbean Sea is peculiarly infested by those voracious creatures, and thus was most singularly accomplished my shipmate Rattlin's Dream.

THE ROMANCE OF REALITY

BEING THE SECOND CHAPTER OF "INCIDENTS OF THE ROAD, OR,
PASSAGES FROM THE LIFE OF A COMMERCIAL TRAVELLER"

BY JOSEPH ANTHONY, JUN

O, how this spring of love resembleth
The uncertain glory of an April day,
Which now shows all the beauty of the sun,
And by and by a cloud takes all away!

SHAKESPEARE

IN the course of the experience of the writer of these papers, some friendships, lasting and esteemed, have been made through a first meeting and acquaintance in a stage-coach. My intimacy with Mr Elton, of —, so originated. A long journey together, by one of the well appointed four-in-hands of the day, was the commencement of our acquaintance, followed by a warm friendship, which has, alas! recently terminated with his death. Incidental to our conversation, in an animated discussion, as we approached the termination of our journey, upon a passage in the works of a mutually-esteemed writer, led to an invitation to my fellow-passenger's library, with the view of our referring together to the passage in question, which reference was to be followed by an adjournment to his supper-table. I accepted the invitation, and the same evening was introduced to my entertainer's little family circle, consisting of his daughter, a young lady of eighteen, and his son, who at the period of my introduction had, like myself, then seen some four and-twenty summers.

The commencement of a delightful series was that evening to me. Between myself and the son of my coach companion an intimacy was then formed, which after years have ripened into the warmest of friendships, and which, it is my happiness to believe, will know no termination but with life. Never lived a more united, a more happy family, than the Eltons. The old gentleman, who was a retired merchant and a widower, was passionately attached to his children, and the warmth of his affection was by them reciprocated in a manner truly delightful to behold.

Edith Elton was very beautiful! I am writing no fiction, nor drawing from the ideal creations of the brain, in introducing this truly lovely girl to the reader. She was very delicate, but there was a vivacity and intelligence in her countenance, an expression of tenderness in her blue eyes, and a nobleness in the contour of her finely-chiselled features, which no description can possibly convey. When I add that she was highly accomplished, possessed an exquisite taste, and sang delightfully, it will not appear surprising that, of the many who visited Horn Cottage—the name of Mr Elton's residence,—there were some who were almost worshippers of the very ground on which she stood.

Grattan Elton, her brother, I found a fine-spirited young fellow—a man after my own heart—intelligent, good-humoured, and manly, possessing a soul that was above a mean action, a nice sense of honour, and a thorough absence of puppyism. His failings might be said to be a hasty temperament and great impetuosity, counterbalanced, however, by a warm heart, and a tone of frankness and manly sincerity pervading all his actions, winning general esteem. Visits to the Eltons with me became

frequent, my vacations and recreations away from the pursuits of business were generally passed with Grattan Elton, and in the course of three years after my first acquaintance with the family, Thorn Cottage had become to me a second home

Having thus briefly introduced the Elton family, and described the footing on which I stood with its members, I here leave them, to introduce other characters who figured in the singular course of events which I am about to relate

There is a time in our lives when the heart is daily awakened to newly-discovered joys, when, as the mind expands, the world, like a vast moving panorama, presents fresh scenes to the delighted eye, objects looked on before are seen again under a new and brighter aspect, light is breaking around the footsteps of the advancing enthusiastic spirit, his hued is the path of life, and the heart lifted buoyantly up in the fulness of its joy, knowing little or nought of doubt and deceit, is full of love, ay, and of happy trusting, too

It was at this period of my boyhood that, on the completion of my devours at school, I visited a relative on the maternal side, who resided in Cornwall, and who had sent a pressing invitation for me to spend a month or two with him, previous to my entering upon the business pursuits for which I was intended For the purpose of this narrative, it is not requisite that I should more than briefly observe that my relative, at the time of my visiting him, was somewhat on the wrong side of sixty, was warm-hearted, though eccentric, occasionally afflicted with the gout, and lived in a rather spacious building, which then bore, and I believe still bears, the name of Rock Hall

It was whilst sojourning in Cornwall that I became acquainted with a young artist, who had only preceded me a few weeks in his visit to B——, the county town in the suburbs of which Rock Hall was situated The wild and picturesque views of the neighbourhood offered great attraction to a lover of fine scenery, to me they afforded untiring objects for companionship and admiration, and although generally alone in my rambles, my relative being too infirm often to accompany me, yet were those lonely wanderings full of delight It was owing to this rambling spirit, and observing the artist sketching some of my favourite views, that I made his acquaintance, although not arising from any particular desire on my part for companionship, for then, and ever since, could I happily, beneath spreading boughs, with Cowley, exclaim—

Here let me, careless and unthoughtful lying,
Hear the soft winds above me sighing,
With all their wanton boughs dispute—
And the more tuneful birds to both replying,
Nor be myself, too, mute

Ah, wretched and too solitary he
Who loves not his own company,
He'll feel the weight of t many a day,
Unless he call in sin or vanity
To help to bear t away

Little surprising however, is it that, through our frequently meeting, two worshippers in the same temple, some sort of acquaintance should arise, although in years there was much disparity between us The artist had seen some five-and-twenty, although he looked much younger, being of slight frame, and femininely fair, whilst I

had scarce reached the threshold of manhood. Our casual acquaintance, notwithstanding, soon grew into close companionship. He was an enthusiast in his love of the art which he followed, and possessed a gentleness of manner, tinged with a shade of pensiveness, and a quiet, polished bearing most winning. I became much attached to him, and used to sit for hours by his side as he sketched, listening with admiration and delight whilst he discoursed on painting, poetry, and music, with an eloquence to me as new as it was charming.

His reading had been varied and extensive, there was also a dash of romance colouring his ideas, and a fervour in his language, when excited, which the most unimaginative could not listen to without interest and delight. To me, youthful listener as I was, his discourse was magical as Prospero's wand, how eagerly I hung upon his words, beholding in imagination scenes of the grand and beautiful which his masterly description conjured up before me, and never shall I forget the delight it was mine to experience, whilst sitting beside him, as he sketched ruin hoary or wooded dell, listening to his glowing language, telling of other scenes where he had wandered, classic spots hallowed for ever by the triumphs of genius, and inspiration of immortal song.

And yet I could not but observe that there was a great tendency to melancholy in my gifted companion, often would he appear lost in a reverie of painful reflections, a long silence being at times broken by a sigh, which seemed to come from the very depths of his soul.

On my first rallying him upon this tendency to sadness, he said, with him it was constitutional, but, as we became more intimate, on my again alluding thereto, and expressing my surprise that he should give way to such attacks of gloom, he smiled, shook his head, told me I was young, basking in the light, and happily knew nought of the shadows which grim care had cast amongst the sunshine of some of the sons of earth.

It was not long ere I discovered that the artist was anything but rich, or even in easy circumstances, and the result of my inquiries respecting him in B—— to some extent accounted for that melancholy which was so conspicuous a feature in his character. It appeared that he had advertised himself in B—— as a portrait-painter, but, up to the time of my meeting him the encouragement received had been so very little, that he had turned his attention to sketching and disposing of views in the neighbourhood as a source of emolument, until he should succeed in becoming better known.

My relative, as I have before observed, was an eccentric but a warm-hearted son of humanity. He was a lover of the fine arts, and the description I gave him of the accomplished yet poor artist, and the expression of my sympathy for him in his struggles, led to a proceeding on the part of the worthy proprietor of Rock Hall, which afforded me very sincere gratification, it was doubly pleasing, for it took me by surprise. A week had elapsed since I first mentioned to him the lowly position and struggling efforts of the sketcher, in whom I felt so much interested, and the absence of any display of sympathy in word or deed on his part had not a little grieved and disappointed me, when I was delightfully undeceived by a revelation of his eccentricity and warmth of heart together.

Returning with him from church one Sunday morning, and the discourse we had heard teaching non-repining, and patience, and humility under affliction, having led my thoughts to the poor artist, I observed that I had

not for some time met him with his portfolio in his accustomed haunts, expressing, at the same time, a desire to learn what had become of him.

"Not seen him, lately?" rejoined my aged companion, "by the way, I know where he lives. Come, let us call upon him."

I knew my relative was somewhat eccentric, and I regarded this to me unexpected proposition to call on the artist, as but a sudden whim, for, as before observed, I had felt much disappointed in finding all the admiration and sympathy which I had expressed for the sketcher, fail to awaken the slightest manifest response in the breast of my worthy host.

To me it had proved a source of much regret, knowing, as I did, the artist was poor and a stranger, and that my entertainer, from his position and influence in the neighbourhood, might be of considerable service to one whom I could not but regard as fated to baffle with adversity, friendless and forsaken.

It will not appear surprising that a young and inexperienced judgment like mine, from what I had seen, should come to such a conclusion, and it may readily be imagined that it was with feelings of considerable delight I heard my worthy companion express his intention of calling upon the artist.

"Mr Blair is above, I suppose," said the old gentleman, as, scarcely awaiting a reply from the domestic who answered our summons at the door of the lodging-house, he passed her, and led the way up a flight of stairs before us, and to my great astonishment, as I followed in his wake, with the preface only of a slight tap opened the door of one of the apartments and entered.

Following after, I soon found myself grasped by the hand of Blair, who, apparently taken by surprise, in a faded and worn dressing-gown, had advanced to meet us.

"This is kind—very kind, sir," said he to my companion, with his soft melodious voice, which seemed to falter with emotion, and, turning his eyes again upon me, looked as if he would express his gratitude to me also, but with the few words he had uttered, he became silent, as though he feared, by again speaking, he should display that weakness which the tear standing in his eye had already revealed.

I was lost in astonishment, but my wonder was not a little increased by the friendly and familiar manner in which my relative proceeded to address the artist, this being the first intimation I had received of his having seen him before. But, the proprietor of Rock Hall was fond of surprises, and this was one, I immediately conjectured, he had prepared for me.

"I told you that I should probably call to-day, Blair," said my companion. "You must find it confoundedly dull here on Sunday, your brush laid aside, and cabined up all alone. A poor look-out this," turning to me as though for an assent to his words, "bricked up, buried, in fact," he continued, whilst turning his gaze through the one window to the row of houses, which seemed oppressively near, on the opposite side of the narrow street. "Nice rooms on the parade Blair, Turner's, you know them, suit you much better—lighter, healthier, something of a view too, room for the winds to blow about. I'd change if I were you, deuced bad policy to stay here—dead and buried—nothing but bricks and blue devils!" And he again turned his eyes to me, as though he would meet, which he certainly did, a look of affirmation to all he said.

"I saw Turner's rooms when I first came," said the artist, "but ——" and, casting his eyes upon the ground, he paused

"Ay, ay, I understand," rejoined my relative, as though it had but then occurred to him that a stronger motive than taste had guided the artist in selecting his lodgings, "I understand, Blair, high charges, but come, we are losing time, our errand here is to request the favour of your company to dinner"

There was a straightforward earnestness of manner in the old gentleman's way of giving the invitation that bore a hearty welcome in every word After a little hesitation, Blair expressed the pleasure that it would afford him, and begging to be excused whilst he retired to change his coat, left us to look over the subjects in his studio, the which, by-the-way, served also the double purpose of his sitting-room

"What think you of this?" said my worthy relative, pointing to an unfinished portrait of himself that stood on the easel I had observed it on first entering the room, and, as may be imagined, it had not a little contributed to the surprise which my companion's proposition to call on the artist had in the first place occasioned

The painting was one of considerable merit, and I was lavish in my encomiums

"Now can I understand," I added, "Blair's absence from his accustomed haunts! You have stolen a march upon me here—I see it all, you have sought him out, found him a worthy, deserving fellow, and have taken him by the hand"

And I was correct, ere Blair rejoined us, the old gentleman briefly informed me, that by my observations his interest in the artist had been awakened, he had called upon him, and the result was not only a commission to paint his own portrait, but he had obtained, also, the same for him from some half dozen others of his, my relative's, friends

I will not dwell upon the introduction of the artist to Rock Hall, he speedily became a great favourite, and, ere the expiration of my visit, Rock Hall had become his home

Yes, his entertainer was proverbial for doing nothing by halves, he found Blair in every respect a gentleman, poor and unfriended, struggling amidst the breakers He took him by the hand, nor sought to know more of the artist's history than that which he himself voluntarily gave, and which was simply that circumstances prevented him from entering into the particulars of his family connexions, and that he had been compelled, in order to gain a livelihood, to fall back upon that art which he had acquired as an accomplishment

Blair continued to follow his profession in my relative's dwelling One of the best rooms in the house, from its spaciousness and the situation of its lights, was converted into his studio, and, previous to my departure, he had commenced the seventh portrait, for which he had received commissions through the instrumentality of his warm-hearted host

And yet, whilst receiving so much kindness, and in his circumstances good fortune, there still remained a mournfulness about him which nothing seemed to relieve, a sadness in the expression of his countenance when in a state of repose, which added to the interest none could but feel who looked upon him, and who had heard of his fallen fortunes With me, great was the sympathy I entertained for him, which strengthened the more we were thrown together, and it was to me delight untiring to sit

for hours in his studio, watching the operations of his brush, listening as he eloquently explained the principles and beauty of his art, or when he led me on the wings of imagination to the realms of poetry and romance. The artist sang also, and that with remarkable taste and expression, and he would at times, as if suddenly inspired, pour forth the language of his saddened spirit in song. Of him, however, when he thus gave vent to his feelings, it could not be said, as in those exquisite lines of which it has been said, that for the picture they present, and their harmony of rhythm, they may scarcely be equalled by any four lines in our language—

Verse sweetens toil, however rude the sound,
 All at her work the village maiden sings,
 Nor, while she turns the giddy wheel around,
 Revolves the sad vicissitude of things

Alas! with Blair, the more he sang the more melancholy he became. His songs were all of a plaintive character, the pathos and tenderness he threw into them rendered them ever effective, and he became an established favourite with all at the numerous parties which were wont to assemble under the hospitable roof of Rock Hall.

Thus leaning from the sunshine to the shade was a striking feature in his character, and although he would at times, in a vague and somewhat mysterious manner, allude to the bright days of the past, and the clouds that had gathered over the star of his destiny, he never entered into particulars and much interested as I felt in one who had so won upon my young imagination, I never indulged the desire which I entertained to learn something more of the misfortunes he alluded to by a single question.

Alas, for human nature, and the outward semblances of humanity! This man, who to every observer appeared, as he did to me, to possess so much exquisite sensibility, so gentle and noble a nature, and to be the undeserving victim of an adverse fate, was in reality a cold-blooded and heartless villain. But I am anticipating. It was some three or four months after the expiration of my visit to Rock Hall, where I had left Blair domiciled almost as one of the family, when I received a letter from my relative, which not a little astounded me, conveying as it did the information that the sheltered artist had proved to be an accomplished swindler.

The particulars of the discovery of his real character, as fully given in the letter which brought such unexpected intelligence, would occupy too much space to introduce here, it is only requisite for me to observe, that the party who had been employed to discover his retreat had, through some clue, traced him to Rock Hall, but through inadvertently discovering himself to Blair when he himself was unprepared for the meeting, and ere he had seen and apprized my relative of his mission, the artist had lost not a moment in suddenly decamping, but not until he had presented a forged cheque for fifty pounds at the banker's of his host.

The cheque was honoured, for Blair was known as an occupant of Rock Hall, in addition to which it bore a fac-simile of my relative's signature. It subsequently appeared, that the expert villain must, at some period, have taken an opportunity to possess himself of a leaf from his host's cheque-book, and had long practised himself in imitating his handwriting, ready to make use of when circumstances might render his departure essential.

The scheme proved, alas! too successful, and within an hour after

quitting the bank he had posted ten miles to catch a fast coach, which, in a few more hours, would land him in Exeter, from which place he would no doubt make his way with such expedition as to baffle all pursuit.

Indeed, it was not until two or three days afterwards the worthy proprietor of Rock Hall discovered that the cheque had been presented and paid to his departed guest. The day that Blair decamped, his absence was first accounted for by the individual who had flattered himself that he had tracked his man—himself unknown and unseen—waiting on my relative to apprise him of the real character he was harbouring, and to request his assistance in effecting a capture.

Alas! it was too late, the bird had flown. I occupied more than half of my worthy friend's long letter to describe to me his amazement—how incredulous he was at first, how satisfied that there must be some mistake, and how, as the proofs came thick and fast upon him, he at length saw how much he had been imposed upon.

It appeared that Blair was an assumed, and that Sefton was the artist's real name. From the functionary who so much enlightened my relative about the character of his late guest, he also learned that the artist was married, and had deserted his wife, after having extravagantly expended some ten thousand pounds which she had brought him as her marriage dowry. It appeared, also, that, by means of his specious trickery, he had succeeded in completely deceiving his wife and her friends as to his true position at the time of the marriage. When too late, they discovered that Sefton, who had high connexions, had brought disgrace upon, and been all but ostracised by his family, and was not only a man of straw, but a dishonoured gambler, a needy adventurer. Not only had he expended the dowry of his wife, but, to a great extent, had laid large levies on the confidence and good-will of her relatives, and when the desperate game he played was on the point of being exposed, and on the eve of a discovery of his powers in the art of caligraphy, he decamped, leaving his wife behind him, almost broken-hearted, and her friends heavily victimised by the too-successful forger.

A correspondence ensued between my relative and the connexions of Sefton's wife, from which he found that the information he had received was in every particular, alas! too true. Under the strong impulse of his feelings, in writing to me again on the subject, he declared that he felt a strong inclination to start forthwith on an expedition, through the length and breadth of the land, in search of the heartless scoundrel. The base and unfeeling manner in which he had deceived and deserted a trusting and loving heart, in the person of his wife, appeared to raise the greatest amount of indignation in my relative's breast. His own wrongs seemed to be forgotten, for they were not mentioned, and I verily believe, had not a touch of gout come on about the time, the proprietor of Rock Hall would have sacrificed his fishing and his shooting to scour the country in search of the skilful impostor, who had shown himself to be so thorough a villain.

The circumstances which I have so far narrated occurred in the year 1832, and from that period, to the year 1845, nothing further relative to the swindler Sefton had transpired. In that interval, the worthy and warm-hearted proprietor of Rock Hall had shuffled off "this mortal coil" without hearing the slightest tidings of his victimiser. After the warmth of his indignation had subsided, in his many communications to

me, he never again alluded to the subject, save in the last epistle which I received from him a little before his death. In it, whilst indulging in a moralising strain on human life, he recalled the circumstances related, expressing a hope that the betrayed and deserted wife of Sefton had found, in the consolations of religion, that peace and happiness which is above the earth's giving, and citing the character of the fostered and befriended Blair, in illustration of the deep baseness of which the human heart is capable. 'Peace to thy manes' for thou hadst, indeed, much sympathy of heart, much love for thy fellow-man. Truth and Charity were thy companions on the path of life and for such—ah! who can doubt?—there is a bright inheritance hereafter.

I had ever felt a strong desire to ascertain whether Sefton's wife, or her friends, had learned anything of his whereabouts since his discovery and flight in Cornwall, and having occasion, in the year 1846, to visit the town, in the neighbourhood of which, as I had learned from Rock Hall, they resided, I made a point of calling upon them. I saw Mrs Sefton and her little boy. In the same house was her father, a venerable, intelligent old gentleman, and a maiden sister of Mrs Sefton's. I found them a very united and exceedingly pious little family, and, in recurring to Sefton, they spoke of him as though he were to them as dead and buried, yet, in a full spirit of forgiveness, with a hope that he had repented, and turned from the fearful course he had once pursued. It appeared that Mrs Sefton, about two years prior to my calling upon her, had received a letter from her husband, requesting an interview, which she had refused, and declared nothing on earth would induce her to see him again. Indeed, I perceived, by the settled serenity of her still beautiful features, that all her thoughts and aspirations were removed from things of this world, save the training of her little boy, whose features bore a striking resemblance to, and strongly reminded me of, his father. I have never seen them since, although, as will appear, I had subsequently occasion to write to Mrs Sefton, whom I cannot but ever remember as one of the most striking and beautiful presentations I ever beheld of a much-injured yet gentle and forgiving spirit.

And now let me request the reader's attention whilst I return to my friends the Eltons. I am writing no fiction. The names of the individuals, it is true, are assumed—a requisite proceeding, as some of the parties are still living—and but four summers have passed since the events occurred which I am about to relate and which, if such were wanting, would afford strong and additional proof that truth is indeed stranger than fiction.

It was about four years after I had made the acquaintance of the Eltons, that, during one of my visits, I learned that at length one of Edith's many admirers had been accepted. When I received this intelligence from her brother Grattan, I was not a little surprised to hear that the favoured individual I had not yet seen. Frequently had I rallied Miss Elton on the subject of her many slaves, more particularly on one, a young surgeon, a very intimate friend of Grattan's and mine, and whom I had always regarded as the most favoured of her suitors. To my surprise, I learned that another, who had taken the field some few months only, had succeeded in gaining a heart, which the young surgeon and others had as many years been endeavouring in vain to win.

With the old gentleman, Mr Willmott, the fortunate suitor, was a pro-

digious favourite, and Edith's brother, sharing the general fascination, when informing me of the acceptance, observed, that much as he felt for the disappointment of his friend Harry Burton, he must confess that he thought Willmott was, from similarity of tastes, ideas, and temperament, much better adapted for Edith. I learned that this universal favourite had been introduced to the family circle by Grattan, who had made his acquaintance at some watering place, and invited him to Thorn Cottage. Mr Willmott, who, it appeared, was a gentleman, enjoying a moderate competency, had become so charmed with the place and the society to which he had been introduced, that, soon after the expiration of his visit, he had returned and engaged apartments in the town and, thriving in his wooing, had proposed, on his marriage, to take a residence within a short distance of Thorn Cottage.

It so chanced, when these tidings were conveyed to me, that Mr Willmott had, the day previous to my arrival, taken his departure on a brief visit to his friends in Wiltshire, where he had some business matters to arrange. Never had I seen Edith Elton look so truly beautiful as she now appeared.

Upon her eyelids many graces sate,
Under the shadow of her even brows,
Working, belgarded and amorous retrate,
And every one her with a grace endowes,
And every one with meekness to her bowes
So glorious mirror of celestiall grace
And soveraine monument of mortal vowes,
How shall frailty pen describe her heavenly face
For feare, through want of skill, her beauty to disgrace!

As though even another light had been lit up in the temple of her mind, her features beamed with a brighter radiance than ever, and as she laid some chalk drawings of Willmott's before me, truly delightful was it to listen to the lute-like voice of the ingenuous, happy, affianced Edith, speaking, from the fulness of her heart, of what Walter had told her of this scene and where he had sketched another. "Happy fellow! he has won a treasure," I thought, as Edith, closing the portfolio, advanced to the piano-forte, and, at her father's request, sang for me a sweet ballad, written and composed by the talented and fortunate Willmott.

Much did I regret that circumstances prevented me prolonging my stay to meet the successful wooer, and after a delightful sojourn of some five or six days, I took my leave, but not until I had given a promise to Mr Elton, Grattan, and Edith, that I would spend a week with them at the time of the marriage, which was to take place some time in the following autumn.

That autumn came. I had received several communications from Grattan Elton in the interval, for we were, and still are, constant correspondents, all was going as merry as a marriage bell, and at length I received the letter announcing the important day, with a postscript from the old gentleman, wherein he expressed a hope that nothing would prevent my being with them a few days before the wedding took place, and that I would make arrangements to stay with them as long as I possibly could, to share in their festivities. Reader, there may be little of the superstition, or first fear, which in the nursery was engrafted on the young mind, left now in thy nature, but hast thou not experienced a presentiment of coming evil—a foreshadowing of events, which hath

brought thee, if not positive sadness, considerable uneasiness? Hast thou never felt a depression stealing on thy spirit—a heaviness and gloom for which thou couldst, perhaps, assign no cause—a darkness, which has resisted all thy efforts to dispel, as though some huge shadow had cast itself upon the sunshine of thy heart, whilst thou hast looked in vain for the substance from which it came? Those who have more than once experienced such remarkable forebodings, followed by unforeseen and unwelcome events, can scarcely be but believers in some mysterious agency—call it second-sight, if you will—which communicates, as it were, with the soul, ere thought can grapple it, as the flash of light precedes the crash of the pealing thunder.

I know not that I ever experienced this peculiar sensation so forcibly as on an evening in September, 1845, when I seated myself beside the most facetious of whips, who drove her Majesty's mail from Lincoln to Peterborough, taking in its way —, that little-known, yet beautifully-situated country town.

Often had I been his companion on the box, and never had I journeyed with him before without appreciating with considerable relish his sterling though unpolished wit, and entering freely into the humour and merriment which seemed ever to be his, when a familiar face, as mine had become to him, was by his side. In vain Old Ned—for so he was called—I say was, for he, in common with most of his brethren, has gone the way of all Juries before the advance of the steeds of time—in vain Old Ned did all he could to enliven me, I knew not why, but I suffered from a sudden depression of spirits, such as I believe it was never before my lot to experience. Rather, however, than the old whip should consider I paid him any disrespect—for we had had many a cheerful journey together—I told him that he must excuse my silence as I was not altogether well. But Old Ned would talk, and doubtless suspecting the cause of my indisposition to chat as of yore, straightway launched into a yarn, the subject of which was the “blue devils,” and how to “fight em.” As a story of the box, and a good one too, were it not so very irrelevant to my narrative, I would here introduce it. Suffice it that the subject of the yarn I have already mentioned, the heroes of the story, the narrator's self and his Baidolph like guard, Bill Hicks, who shared with him the reputation of being second to very few in the quantities of potent liquids which he could imbibe. Poor Old Ned! thou art gone the way of all flesh, yet long will the rich, unc'uous manner, in which thou wert wont to spin thy yarns, live in the memory of one who by thy side has travelled many and many a mile, in winter rude and summer mild, midst storm and darkness, and when stars have been gemming the vault of heaven, and hill and valley, lit by their tranquil and holy light, were slumbering away hours of the still night. Yes, that once well appointed four is off—Old Ned is gone—no more the road reverberates in the silent night to the clattering gallop of the spirited team, grass grows now on the highway, and the steam-whistle, like the cry of a giant in his agony, alone disturbs the midnight hour, where of yore the guard's horn was wont to awaken musical echoes in the woods, and rouse the recluse spirit in the turnpike-house from his stolen slumber.

The mail set me down at the entrance to Thorn Cottage, and as I passed up the garden, the sound of music and the shadowed forms of

dancers sitting on the window-blinds, informed me that the evening's amusement had commenced.

Whilst engaged at my toilet, I was joined by my friend Grattan, who was all impatience for me to join the company, and to introduce me to his friend and intended brother-in-law, Willmott.

There was a brilliant gathering of the beauty of the neighbourhood present, as well as a number of Mr Elton's relatives, who had come some distance on a visit to be present at the wedding, which, as I have before observed, was to take place in a few days. After the usual friendly greetings with those not engaged in the dance, whom I had been in the habit of meeting at Mr Elton's, and after the customary cordial shake of the hand and brief chat with the old gentleman, who sat the picture of happiness, contemplating the enjoyment of those around him, I drew with Grattan to a part of the room which commanded a full view of the assembled company.

Grattan was making some remarks about a particular beauty in the room, to whom, as a partner for the next dance, he was proffering to introduce me, when, all of a sudden, in looking for the object he was describing, my gaze became rivetted on the partner of Edith Elton, who, at that moment, was leading her by the hand, advancing in a figure of the quadrille, when his full countenance was presented to me.

"For Heaven's sake," I involuntarily exclaimed, whilst grasping the arm of young Elton, "who is that dancing with Edith?"

"Willmott," was the reply. "But, good God, what is the matter?"

For a moment or two I was silent, indeed, my astonishment seemed to have deprived me of the power of utterance.

"The villain!" I at length exclaimed, in a tone of voice sufficiently loud to startle a group standing near, who turned round to observe us. "Come with me, Grattan, let us leave the room," I hurriedly whispered, with as much control over my sudden excitement as I could command, "quickly, ere the dance be over, unobserved, if possible, I must speak to you alone, and immediately."

Young Elton saw at once, by my manner, that something unusual and of moment had occurred. Without uttering a syllable, he led the way. We glided out of the room, and taking a light from the hall, Grattan conducted me to his study. As I afterwards learned from him, a presentiment of evil had come upon him from the moment I had exhibited such sudden emotion on beholding Edith and her partner, and when he closed the door of the apartment to which he had conducted me, and placed the light on the table, he turned an anxious, inquiring look upon me, with features pale as death. I will but briefly dwell on a scene, the recollection of which will be to me ever deeply painful. The reader will have anticipated the discovery. The painful truth was soon told to that affectionate, that fond, loving brother Willmott, who had gained the esteem of father and son, and the affections of Edith, was a swindler—a double-dyed, heartless villain. It is scarcely requisite for me to add that, in the accomplished and too-successful wooer, I had recognised the unprincipled and cold-blooded Sefton. I could not possibly be mistaken. In reply to my questions, Grattan informed me that none of Willmott's friends were present. To the invitations sent, letters in reply had been received from some, begging to be excused on account of the great distance, adding a hope that Edwin and Edith would soon visit them,

others had not replied at all, which Willmott attributed to their feeling somewhat offended that Grattan and his sister had not paid to the family a visit, as was once arranged. This arrangement, I may here observe, was Willmott's own, and, as was afterwards remembered, through an ingenious device of his, also, the visit was to be postponed until after the nuptials. The letters received in reply to the invitations sent were, of course, Sefton's own.

Years had passed since I had last seen him, but his features had been too deeply then impressed on my memory for me ever to forget them. There was but little alteration in his appearance, as I have before observed, he was small-featured and femininely fair, and the time that had elapsed since we had last met was passed at a period of his life when manhood may be said to be far from maturity. To Grattan, to his father, and to Edith, I had long ago related the circumstances connected with the villain artist I had met in Cornwall. Grattan at once remembered the relation thereof, and as the full truth broke in upon him, in the bitterness of his grief and indignation, he gave vent to his feelings in a paroxysm of rage, which I had some difficulty in calming.

Under the influence of his excited feelings, he was about to rush into the ball room, and brand Willmott as a villain before the whole company. My representing the shock which, coming so suddenly upon them, it would be to Edith and her father, alone restrained him. Painful, indeed, must have been the thoughts then flitting through his mind, reflecting, as he naturally would, that through his want of judgment and over-confidence, he had been so completely duped. Won by Sefton's plausible manners and gentlemanly bearing, on the groundwork of a casual introduction, he had formed a friendship for and introduced him to his father's house—had eulogised his qualities to Edith. He knew that she had given her heart, with all the fervour of a woman's love, to the successful wooer, and now, in the bitterness of his spirit, after the first outbreak of passion, he threw himself into a chair, buried his face in his hands, exclaiming, 'Poor Edith!' and sobbed like a child.

Soon, however, had the deep sympathy for his sister, which for the moment had unmanned him, passed away, and after a hurried exchange of opinions as to the best plan of proceeding, it was agreed that we should at once reveal the matter to the old gentleman, and take his advice how to act under the circumstances. I need scarcely say that all this, as well as that which followed in the study, passed in a much briefer period than the time it takes to describe.

Having instructed one of the servants to proceed so as not to draw the attention of any part of the company upon him, I gave him a note to deliver to his master, the pencilled message requesting him to lose not a moment in quietly withdrawing, and joining me and Grattan in the study. Whilst we were awaiting his coming, Grattan paced the room hurriedly to and fro, in a state of excitement bordering on distraction. The old gentleman's countenance bore indication of considerable uneasiness when he joined us. I will not, however, dwell on the painful subject of his distress—the alternating bursts of grief and indignation which escaped him on receiving the unwelcome and unexpected intelligence. He and Grattan, however, together beheld a gleam of hope in the possibility that I might be mistaken, and the *sor-disant* Willmott, without

causing any notice from the guests, in obedience to the summons sent by Mr Elton, entered the study where we awaited him

It may be well, in order to make the narrative intelligible, in this place to observe, that Sefton, when I first met him as Blau, had never heard me (being but a youth) called by any other than my christian name, and, as my relative in Cornwall was on the maternal side, it was probably never known to Sefton, or, of so little moment, forgotten if ever heard, that my name was different to that of his kind-hearted host. Hence, on hearing me spoken of by the Eltons, there was nothing in the name to inform him that we had met before, and that Grattau's friend was no other than his once companion, the youth in Cornwall, and who, alas! for the success of his plans, knew so much of his history

That which followed, on Sefton's entrance, may easily be imagined. On hearing my voice when I accosted him by his own name, he became deadly pale, and his agitation so great that he could scarcely stand, seeking the friendly aid of the back of a chair which stood near to support himself

For a moment his astonishment and consternation appeared to have deprived him of the power of utterance, and the play and contortions of the muscles of his mouth revealed how truly had gone home to his alarmed conscience the words which told him he was discovered. After a pause, however, during which to some extent he managed to recover from the confusion into which he had been thrown, the practised villain, with an unblushing front, pretended to regard me as one labouring under some strange delusion, and, assuming an air of the heroics, turned to Mr Elton, requesting to know the meaning of so strange a proceeding. Without giving Mr Elton time to reply to the question, under the influence of passion, which I did not care to restrain, I proceeded, in no measured terms, at once to accuse him, not only as an impostor, but a cold hearted villain, that I could procure proof of his having committed forgery, and was determined, if possible, on bringing him to justice.

"You have," I continued, whilst he quailed beneath my look "by means of your specious and plausible manner, ingratiated yourself, under a false name, here, as you have before elsewhere succeeded in doing. In one instance you requested kindness with base ingratitude, and the height of your criminality was robbery! Here, your villainy is of a blacker dye, for you have, under a false character, won the affections of a confiding woman, and may have destroyed her peace for ever, for, even were you able to disprove what I allege—that you have stooped to forgery—you cannot deny that your name is Sefton, and that your wife still lives, an instance of your cold blooded heartlessness and treachery."

With all my knowledge of his character, I was certainly not prepared for the display of self possession and coolness which he had by this time summoned to aid him in the emergency.

Turning again to Mr Elton, with an air of much-injured innocence, he claimed his protection from such unfounded attacks upon his character, declaring, upon his honour as a gentleman, that he knew nothing of me or the circumstances I had been relating, and then, after a brief pause, added, that he would stay no longer to be so insulted, nor would he again place his foot over Mr Elton's threshold, until he should receive an apology for the gross insult he had received.

I was perfectly amazed at this coolness, and could clearly perceive that

the assurance and self-possession which he displayed were rapidly producing an effect upon the senior and younger Elton. This soon manifested itself: father and son alike were as is one who perceives an unexpected gleam where all before was utter darkness. Yes, it was possible, that it might be a mistake of identity. Grattan and the old gentleman agreed that, after the lapse of so many years, there was much probability of my labouring under a delusion.

They spoke agreeably to the hope to which they both seemed to cling, but I was not less firm in my conviction, and pledged myself to produce, in two days, unquestionable proofs in support of the charge which I had made. Willmott, as he called himself, who, in spite of his nerve, I could perceive, was anything but at ease, in accordance with his expressed determination to quit the house, evinced that he was about to retire.

"You will not refuse to say 'good night,' " said the accomplished villain, as he advanced with extended hand to the old gentleman. "I am, at all events, innocent until proved guilty," smiling as he uttered this, as though the bare supposition of his being the guilty party, as by me represented, was an amusing piece of pleasantry.

At the same moment, Mr Elton turned to look into my countenance, with an expression that seemed inquiringly and hopefully to say, "Are you not mistaken, he is surely not the depraved villain, Sefton?" In my looks, however, he would read anything but a response to the hope which he seemed so fondly to cling to, for, had I before entertained the shadow of a doubt—had my confidence in the slightest wavered, this last act more than ever convinced me of his being no other than the plausible scoundrel, whose proceedings in Cornwall had presented to me the first instance of the deep baseness of which the human heart is capable.

Grattan Elton, although with his father strongly hoping, and more than half-inclined to believe, that I was mistaken—so thoroughly had he ingratiated himself with father and son—yet, influenced by my unshaken confidence, refused to accept the proffered hand which Sefton, in withdrawing, extended towards him.

"Should," said Grattan, "my friend fail in the proofs he pledges himself to bring, the position in which I am now placed will be ample apology to you for declining your hand. Should his allegations prove true, you will hear more from me."

This last sentence was uttered slowly, but in a firm determined voice that had greater significance than the words themselves, and I could perceive beneath the brother's searching eye, that the impostor slightly trembled.

Surprised at our absence, Miss Elton at this moment entered the study, as Sefton was retiring. With a grace of manner, possessed to a degree rarely equalled, the intended husband advanced to meet her, and taking her hand, he said,

"My love, I am unexpectedly obliged to bid you good night. Mr Elton and your brother will give you an explanation when I am gone. I leave my character fearlessly in your hands, although it at present appears to be suffering from this gentleman," pointing as he spoke to me, "who is labouring under some unaccountable delusion, and who has brought charges against me, which, although utterly without foundation, and unaccompanied by a single proof, I much regret to perceive are half-

believed Until the matter be cleared up, and I receive an apology for the insult which I have received beneath this roof, I cannot think of again entering its portals, even to see you, my dear Edith Dearest Edith, good night!"

Then changing the tones of his voice, and throwing therein all the indignant sternness which he could command, he continued,

"Mr Elton, Mr Grattan Elton, good night! and to you, sir," next addressing me, "let me have your proofs—yes, your proofs, sir—soon as possible, failing which, you will learn more of Edwin Willmott than you may possibly like!"

I met the theatrical way in which this was given, and the look of defiance with which it was accompanied, with a smile, contenting myself, as he quitted the room, by throwing as much contempt as possible in the tones of my voice, whilst I slowly uttered,

"Edwin Willmott!—"

As may be imagined, there was something of a scene attendant upon the unexpected parting of Edith and her affianced husband, this, in part, however, we were spared, as she accompanied him from the room. She was absent but a short time, the door closed on him who was destined never there to enter again, and she returned in a state of great agitation to hear from her father's lips that which, if true, was the destruction of her day-dreams for ever.

The festive proceedings were soon brought to a conclusion, Grattan informed the company that his sister had become suddenly indisposed, and a whisper having gone forth that something unexpected had occurred, they speedily retired, and in a short time after the house was as still as death.

The excitement that young Elton and myself were under was too great for us to think of our seeking our pillows, and that no time might be lost we remained up together, and succeeded in prevailing on the postmaster of the town, who had made up the post-bags to unscale them for letters which I had written to Mrs Sefton and to her father.

In these communications I stated fully all the particulars connected with my meeting with Sefton, under the assumed name of Willmott, and his engagement to Miss Elton, requesting them, if possible, not to lose a moment in coming over to —, to confirm the discovery I had made, and so frustrate the villain's design.

My impression, whilst penning the letters, was, that they would not be required. "To-morrow, Grattan," I said, "the bird will have flown." Young Elton, however, seemed to cling to the hope that I was labouring under a mistake, and indeed, the more he reflected on the circumstances, he appeared somewhat inclined to regret the course he had pursued towards Willmott, on such likely to be mistaken grounds as memory, when opposed to his knowledge of him, which had always found him to be a man of strict honour.

Strong in the impression that Willmott would not remain an hour in the town after quitting Mr Elton's, after an early breakfast on the following morning I called at his residence, which, I may here mention, preparatory to the marriage he had taken, furnishing it—alas! for some of the tradesmen in the town—in the very first style.

My surmise proved too well founded, Sefton had taken his departure,

as we learned from one of the domestics, that very morning by the up-mail which passes through at half-after three. He had instructed them to say that he should return on the following evening, in the event of any one calling to see him during his absence.

I will not attempt to describe the manner in which this intelligence affected the old gentleman and his son, or the almost silent but painfully visible effect it produced on Edith.

"Gone!" she exclaimed in a tone of voice that I shall never forget, she said no more, but the colour forsook her cheeks from that moment for ever, and she seemed like one awakening from a beautiful dream to a scene of utter wreck and desolation.

As the close of a beautiful dream
Which Fancy hath wreath'd in radiance so bright,
And broken her spell in the darkness of night

The reader will be prepared to hear that the accomplished swindler had left — considerably in debt. On the strength of his intimacy with the Eltons, and his engagement to Mr. Elton's daughter, who it was known, in her own right possessed a handsome fortune, the tradesmen of the place had trusted Willmott without the slightest reserve, and were consequently heavy sufferers. Grattan Elton, only a week prior to the distressing *dénouement*, had advanced him a sum of money, as a temporary loan, some very plausible pretext being advanced at the time by the borrower for his requiring it for a short time only.

The self-same day of Sefton's flight saw young Elton's departure on the somewhat Quixotic expedition of overtaking him, burning with indignation, and fired almost to a state of frenzy by the reflection that he and his family had been so grossly and unfeelingly deceived. As to the old gentleman, he appeared deeply sensible that he had much to be grateful for, in his darling child's narrow escape, and yet to him it was a serious blow. The happiness of his Edith had been the subject of his day dreams for years. Under his approval and esteem for the same object, she had given away her woman's heart, the vision of a bright future had been suddenly dispelled, and he trembled for the probable effect it might produce on one he so truly idolized.

On the third day after Sefton's flight, the brother of his wife arrived, in accordance with the request contained in my letters. His presence, however, was not required, the *soi-disant* Willmott, by his departure, having dispelled all doubts as to his being the impostor I had described. During his stay, Mrs. Sefton's brother, to Mr. Elton and myself, entered fully into an account of the many pieces of villany of which Sefton had been guilty, and it appeared that had it not been for his wife, who (though determined never to see him again) had so far interceded for him as to induce our informant and other members of his family, that had severely suffered by him, to promise to stay their efforts to bring him to justice, there was but little doubt they would ultimately have brought home to Sefton the punishment his crimes so richly merited.

Grattan's pursuit was unsuccessful. Sefton was too great an adept in the science of retreat to be caught, and the exasperated brother returned, after some days absence, to find his sister confined to her room by a severe attack of indisposition, consequent upon the shock she had received, and which her delicate frame was so little capable of sustaining.

Before my departure from Thorn Cottage, Edith had sufficiently recovered to sit up in her room, where, at her request, I proceeded to wish her good-bye. This was the first time I had seen her since, in her brother's study, on the eventful night of Sefton's discovery, when, after he had left us, to her father, to Grattan, and to me, she declared her conviction that the very suspicion of his being guilty of the charge I had advanced, was a wrong to the nobleness of his nature, that she felt confident there was some unfortunate error, and expressed her reliance, her unalterable trust and confidence in him she loved, alas! too well. And, oh! what a change had taken place in the beautiful Edith. I could not have believed it possible that, in so short a period, such an alteration could have been effected. Her smile was the same, sweet and winning as ever, but her cheeks were very pale, and her voice, with its usual melody, had now a melancholy saddened tone, which, when it first fell on my ear, almost unmanned me.

There was ever something so open, so charmingly ingenuous in Edith's manner, combined with the unreserve attendant upon our long friendship, that I ever felt in my conversation with her as though I were speaking to a sister. Had she, indeed, been so, I could not have experienced a keener pang than I did on first beholding the gentle sufferer, the sweet, yet mournful tones of whose voice revealed that the strings of the lute were breaking. With an apparent effort at cheerfulness, she spoke of the eventful circumstances that had passed, said she should soon be herself again, and then proceeded to request that I would describe to her my first meeting with Sefton, and the subsequent circumstances which developed his true character.

It was in vain I stated that her medical attendant had enjoined me not to enter upon the subject, and had given his permission only for me to see her, to say adieu, on the understanding that my visit was to be but brief.

"Next time I come to Thorn Cottage, Miss Elton," I said, "you will be much better, stronger, and——"

"Next visit" said the beautiful invalid, interrupting me, "that may be a very long time, and," she continued, after a short pause, whilst a faint smile, like a radius fitting o'er the winter's snow, passed over her pallid features, "by that time the subject will have lost its interest."

I found it impossible to refuse her earnest desire, and as her father, who had accompanied me, also expressed a wish that I should comply with her request, I entered fully into an account of my first meeting with Blair, the high estimate I had formed of him, his introduction to my relative's house, and, in short, the whole series of events connected with the accomplished villain already communicated to the reader.

When I spoke of my interview with Mrs. Sefton the listener sighed deeply, and whilst her bosom heaved with emotion, tears, which she did not attempt to restrain, suffused her beautiful eyes, testifying with silent eloquence her sympathy for one who, perhaps, like herself, had loved too well.

When I had brought my story to an end, for some moments Miss Elton remained silent, with her eyes fixed intently on the floor, apparently lost in deep thought. I did not interrupt her musings, but turned to look at her father, who, also, in an apparent reverie, sitting upon the sofa and

leaning his hands on his stick, was gazing earnestly on the features of his invalid daughter, with an expression of blended apprehension and affection, as though there was centred his world, and to him all besides were a desert, a blank, a nothingness

When Edith again spoke it was upon some other subject, and it appeared after that interview the name of Sefton or Edwin Willmott was never heard again to pass her lips Ere taking my final leave, at Edith's request I read to her for near an hour from one of her favourite authors, Mrs Hemans I remember well that I closed the volume with the reading of those beautiful lines, "The Voice of Spring,"

I come, I come, ye have called me long,
I come o'er the mountains with light and song!

and observed, as I rose to bid her good bye, that I hoped on my visit in the following spring, I should find her fully restored to health and the joyous Edith I had once known her For a moment her features were illumined with a smile, which, passing away, left an expression of suffering and melancholy behind, which I could not contemplate without considerable pain, and as she extended her hand to bid me adieu, I could read in the language of her tear-dimmed, spiritually-soft blue eyes, she felt at that moment the spring I spoke of she would never see

I never saw her more

Spring, the beautiful spring that she loved so well, came with its sunshine and its flowers, and Edith Elton was sleeping her last sleep in the churchyard of —

Grattan, in his customary letters, had, at various times, informed me of his sister's rapid decline The first communication which I received from him after my departure conveyed the intelligence that she had fallen into a state of despondency from which nothing could arouse her, another, that she had taken to her room—then she was a little better—was rallying—was worse again—dangerous symptoms had revealed themselves—she was wasting away—she was dead

Young Elton's letter, containing the last melancholy piece of intelligence, also informed me, that much as he anticipated Edith's death would affect the old gentleman, he was not prepared to find him taking it so deeply to heart "He shuns all society, wanders about alone, sometimes steals out at the dead of night, and passes hours by Edith's grave If you possibly can spare the time, by the friendship you bear me," continued Grattan's letter to me, "come over and assist me to rouse him from the depth of his despondency"

About a month after Miss Elton's death, I stood once more under the roof of Thorn Cottage, where I had passed some of the most joyous moments of my life Alas! how great the change since I had there paid my first visit, there was a gloom about the place quite oppressive, and from the moment my eyes rested on the old gentleman, I felt that ere long the wreck would be indeed complete, for of a verity one glance was enough to tell his spirit was, indeed, broken All our efforts to rouse him were in vain, he resolutely refused to change the scene, even for a few days, clinging to the spot where the idol of his heart had been—dwelling on the pages she had been wont to read—playing over her favourite songs—and hovering around her last resting-place—as though

he sought and hoped for her gentle spirit to revisit earth, to cheer him in the intensity of his grief

I may here observe, that of him who had been the chief cause of this misery, I have never since heard. It is within the bounds of probability, that in my wanderings I may again meet with him—such is my fervent desire and hope—and should we meet, wherever it may be, it will prove an eventful hour in the villain's life. There is another who also indulges the hope that, whatever else may be to him the dispensations of fate, Sefton may but once again cross his path, and who strongly entertains the impression that such will yet be the case. Grattan Elton travels much at home and abroad, that one object is ever uppermost in his mind, and who shall say the day of expiation shall not come? Although four years have now elapsed since the discovery and flight of Sefton, and although not the slightest clue to his whereabouts has transpired, I have little doubt, unless he has quitted the country, that he is at the present moment in some part of the kingdom, under an assumed name, by means of his rare talents and accomplishments, practising some successful piece of villany.

The following lines were pencilled near Edith Elton's grave by one who, in her death, lost one of the brightest gems from the circle of his friendships, who will ever cherish her remembrance whilst memory is his to recal the past, and whilst he may, on the wings of imagination, defeat fate and time by living by-gone hours again —

“Thou of the soft blue eye,
That 'neath this massive time worn slab art sleeping,
Not lone I sigh,
Around thy earthly bed the night winds, sweeping,
Wail in their flight o'er thee, sad requiem keeping

Sweet flower for whom
On worship border'd kindred's love, so deep
In rayless gloom
Aye! thou hast left them o'er thy flight to weep,
And one whose sorrow is for tears too deep

Thou wert his child,*
Yet since thy death, of thee he hath not spoken—
He hath not smiled
Since unto him thy parting words were spoken,
Soon will he follow, for his heart is broken *

Thou of footstep light,
Whose voice was joyous as a woodland bird
When took its flight
To realms above thy spirit—hosts were stirred,
And in rejoicings was thy welcome heard

Yes, thou art blest,
If sages of the earth have told us true,
A purer guest
Than thy young spotless spirit never flew
To halls of light beyond yon spangled blue

* Some few months after his daughter's death, my esteemed friend, Mr Elton, was borne to his last home.

ISABELLA BURTON

A TALE OF LOVE

— ‘My dear, you will lose him altogether, if you do not take care!’

“I don’t mind, it is not in my nature to submit to it, and he knows that very well.”

“But you must admit that you give him ample cause for fault-finding.”

“If I do, what then? Are not lovers bound to bear all that their ladies choose to inflict upon them? I am not married to him yet, and I never will be, so long as he evinces so unamiable a temper. It was enough for him that I accepted his offer, and I shall now do just as I please. Oh, that I lived in the age of chivalry, when a gallant knight looked up to his lady as to a ‘star apart,’ and risked his very life to fulfil her slightest behests! Those were the times when women were valued as they ought to be.”

“I am not very learned in history, but I fancy, my dear Isabella, you would have met with compensating inconveniences in those days of convents and lawless tyranny. But to return to the point in question. You really must carry your haughty head a little lower, and restrain your wild spirits. You cannot think how I pitied Mr. Lennox last night, when you were whispering so long, under the orange-tree in the conservatory, with young Wilson, just after you had treated *him* with the utmost scorn.”

“Well, I did it on purpose. What business had Frederic to hunt ~~that~~ I should not dance so often when others were sitting still? If girls *will* be stupid and ugly, I can’t help that, they may continue wallflowers for me. And for him to notice what became of them when he ought to have been entirely occupied with me! I shall teach the young gentleman better in a short time, or——”

And Isabella Burton tossed her magnificent head, and walked out of the room. Her companion looked after her with a sigh, and then resumed her work.

Miss Burton was the belle of Shepperton, a country town in the north of England. Her father, a wealthy mill-owner, desirous that she should have an education which he considered suitable to her fine abilities, and the large fortune he intended for her, had sent her to a fashionable boarding-school in London, and from this she had emerged with her good qualities exaggerated into bad ones, if we may use so strong an expression. She had formerly been a pleasant little girl, with a remarkably truthful and independent character. Her liveliness had now degenerated into a kind of daring levity, her truthfulness into the remorseless uttering of bitter words whenever she chose to be severe, her independence into an excessive hauteur and self-will. The whole town of Shepperton was busy with her name, and though this notoriety, together with her queenly beauty, at first attracted lovers, they were, one by one, disgusted with her airs, and only thought of amusing themselves by flirting with her. To this general defalcation Frederic Lennox was the only exception. Deeply smitten by her charms, he had courage and resolution enough to undertake her reformation. He had, as we have seen, succeeded in his suit to her, and he now persevered, at the cost of severe heartache, and many a

moment of despairing bitterness, in pointing out her glaring faults. Her vexation at his plain-dealing was so great, that she would often have given up her engagement with him, had she not been restrained by the esteem that she could not avoid yielding to his manly qualities, and the confidence in him that lurked at the bottom of her heart. Besides, there was something in his very sincerity, however disagreeable to her, that harmonised with the natural nobility of her character, and she experienced a sensation of gratitude for his steadfast love which *the woman* cherished, though *the beauty* as carefully concealed.

The young lady to whose gentle remonstrances Miss Burton had, as was usual with her, turned a deaf ear, was a cousin to whom she was much attached, and who had been admitted by Mr Burton into his own family, with the double purpose of assisting his widowed sister, who had two other daughters, and of giving his spoiled and only child an amiable companion. Mary Graham was of Scotch extraction on the father's side, and her mild blue eyes, her light curling hair, and the clear red and white of her complexion, formed a charming contrast with her cousin's more brilliant loveliness.

Miss Graham was not destined to be long left in peace this morning. Isabella had not quitted the room a quarter of an hour, when the door opened, and Frederic Lennox entered unannounced. His brow was unusually clouded, and he seemed rather relieved than otherwise to find Isabella absent. Truth to tell, he was not sorry to have an opportunity of disclosing his irritated feelings to the sympathising ear of Mary Graham, whom he had ever found a judicious confidante, rather a perilous position thus for a maiden with a loving and disengaged heart. We shall see how Mary stood the test.

"You saw, last night," began the lover, in hesitating accents.

His listener bowed her head.

"Miss Graham, I have almost made up my mind. Isabella is one to whom I shall never dare to commit the happiness of my life. I have tried all that patience and sincerity, combined with the deepest devotion, can do, and I begin to despair. The way in which she went on with that booby, young Wilson! I can bear it no longer. She does not love me. I will release her. And yet, what would I not give to hear her say one really affectionate word! I cannot free myself from the chains which her fascinations have thrown around me. Oh, misery! misery to her and to me!" And the wretched young man buried his face in his hands.

Mary Graham seemed struggling with some strange emotion. Her bosom rose and fell, and her cheek was now pale as a lily, and anon suffused with the deepest crimson, while her compressed lips, like crushed roses, showed the effort she made to conceal her feelings. At length she succeeded in mastering them so far as to reply, in a calm voice, that bore no evidence of the struggle within,

"Mr Lennox, you must not judge entirely by what you see. Isabella's pride alone sustains her in her defiance of you. In reality she loves you, loves you dearly, and, contradictory as it may appear, the sincerity for which she quarrels with you is the very quality that holds her most deeply attached. She only wants more deference, a kind of chivalric gallantry, such as is seldom met with in the present day. Isabella is very romantic, notwithstanding the chilling atmosphere of a London school, and has a high opinion of her sex, and this is the source whence arises so much that

displeases you She is a noble girl at heart, and so you will find if you have a little more patience She is very young In a few years she will sober down, and become all that you can wish

"Ah! Miss Graham, you are a warm and persuasive advocate for your cousin, but I fear you judge her by your own gentle heart and pure feelings It is not romance alone, or, if it be, it is a kind of romance with which I would willingly dispense, that prompts Isabella to behave in a manner so distressing to those who truly esteem her, and wish to see her bright in womanly graces as she is in queenly attractions Yes, I am determined upon it I will try her a little longer, and if there be no amendment, I will tear my heart from hers, whatever it may cost her or me Anything would be better than this lingering agony"

A light footstep was heard upon the stairs as he concluded, and before either could recover their composure, the object of their conversation entered She seemed in the best-possible humour, and never had looked more lovely, but she stopped short when she had advanced half-way up the room, and scrutinised the agitated countenances before her It had been a subject for a painter that elegant apartment, with the sun's rays streaming in softened lustre through the rose-tinted window-curtains, and falling full on the imperial form that seemed to float upon the air, so beautiful was the attitude in which it had arrested itself The full lips were slightly parted, disclosing the perfect teeth within, and the large dark eye was fixed in amazement that suddenly flashed into scorn, while the glorious hair encircled the small imperious head as with a natural coronet Mary sat somewhat in the shade, her head bent low to conceal her quivering lips and tearful eyes, but Frederic's noble countenance was exactly opposite the light that revealed the workings of his features, now gradually subsiding into a calm marble stateliness, as he marked the changing expression of his mistress's eye At length the spell was broken, and the bitter words flowed forth

"I beg your pardon for my abrupt entrance I really was not aware that I was interrupting so interesting a conversation Pray, Mr Frederic Lennox, may I entreat you will proceed with your remarks, and not mind me Or, if you *particularly* wish to be alone, I shall be happy to leave the room You are silent Perhaps, Miss Graham, *you* are prepared with an answer?"

Mary rose from her seat, pale as ashes "Isabella," she murmured, "you are unjust I leave you together, perhaps you will then come to a better understanding"

"Mary, I command you to stay I have nothing, and shall henceforth have nothing to say to Mr Lennox, that the whole world may not hear Frederic, I have long noted your wavering affection, you can see nothing but faults in me, and as I am not disposed to alter or restrain my natural inclinations for any man in the world, and least of all for *you*, who ought to worship my very imperfections ——"

Frederic interrupted her "You release me from my engagement Be it so, Miss Burton I accept my liberty" And he left the room

Oh, woman! how contradictory art thou Of what an entangled web of various and conflicting feelings is thy being composed! Isabella had been sustained by the haughtiness of her nature throughout the preceding scene, but now that her lover was really gone, gone for ever, an acute pain stung her heart, and the proud beauty would willingly have knelt at

the feet of him whom she had banished, and implored his pity. She rushed to the door and down the stairs with a vague intention of calling him back, heedless of the wondering looks of the man servant whom she met on her way. Just as she reached the hall, the outer door closed—it was too late. She returned to the drawing-room, and wept as if her heart would break. In a few days she heard that Frederic Lennox had departed for the Continent.

Many were the conjectures of the good people of Shepperton as to the reason of the sudden rupture of the engagement. Some ascribed it to Isabella's open flirtations, others said that she had dismissed her lover because she did not consider him good enough for her, for she had the pride of a duchess, and this latter opinion seemed to receive confirmation from her brilliant appearance at a public ball the evening after Frederic's departure became known, upon which occasion she flirted more desperately than ever. A close observer might have discerned a tinge of bitterness in her lively conversation, an effort in her excessive laughter, an occasional rising of tears that would not be repressed, and an unnatural flushing on her cheek and brow. But the little world of the ball-room saw nothing of all this, and things passed off extremely well, until, late in the evening, in the midst of a gay quadrille, Isabella suddenly pressed her hand to her head, and the next moment was carried out fainting. She was ill for many weeks, from over-exertion, the gossips said, though some shook their heads, and connected it all with Frederic's extraordinary flight. They never ascertained exactly how it was, for Isabella Burton appeared among them no more.

Just about this time Mr Burton retired from business, sold his beautiful residence, and went with his daughter and niece to live in the south of England. And here we, as well as their neighbours at Shepperton, lose sight of them for several years.

It was a beautiful morning in early spring, the hawthorns were budding, and the birds warbling their sweetest songs, as an elegant female figure in slight mourning wended her way along the green lanes and beneath the tall hedges, towards a little village in the county of Sussex. Having reached its one street, she passed like an angelic visitant from house to house, blessing the inhabitants by a kind word or a timely alms, praying by the bedside of the sick, and raising the depressed spirits of the lonely and heart-stricken. As she disappeared into the last house, a tall young man, wrapped in a large military cloak, strode quickly by it, and out at the other end of the street. The lady soon followed, unconscious that her motions were watched by a pair of kind blue eyes from behind the sturdy stem of an old and picturesque oak that spread its gnarled branches over the stile which she crossed on her way into the fields. She walked on in deep meditation, the cloaked figure following at some distance, and then turned into a small grove or plantation, directing her steps towards a moss-grown monument that crumbled in its midst. Here, for the first time, she looked round, and perceived the stranger behind her. Her immediate impulse was to hurry onwards, but something in the gait of the unknown arrested her flight, and she paused, trembling and quite still, until he came up to her. He threw aside his cloak, and Isabella Burton, uttering a wild scream, sank to the ground, for Frederic Lennox, the long-lost and deeply-lamented, stood before her.

The young man took her gently in his arms, and carried her to the side of a little brook that flowed through the plantation, where, by dint of sprinkling her face with water, and rubbing her small cold hands, and still more by the words of enraptured tenderness that he breathed into her ear, he succeeded in recovering her from the deep swoon in which life itself seemed drowned. The lovers, for such they truly were, though time, and change, and bitter feelings had passed between them, sat down on the lowest step of the monument. Pass we over the first tearful caresses and rapid explanations. Isabella at length roused herself from her entrancement.

"And how, dear Frederic," said she, "did you find me out?"

"It was with much trouble that I did so, sweetest, but at length I was fortunate enough to meet with an old friend of your father's, and he told me all that had happened, and where you were now residing."

"And how—how—did you know—that I——"

"That you—what? dear Isabella," asked the young man, smiling at her evident embarrassment.

"In short, that I was not so naughty a girl as I used to be," whispered the once saucy beauty, leaning her head on her lover's shoulder, and looking affectionately into his face.

"Of that I assured myself before I ventured to appear before you," answered Frederic, accompanying his words by a little ceremony that we will not mention. "I have lodged in the village for two days, and I have heard enough in that time to assure me that I might claim your acquaintance without being summarily dismissed by the title, 'Mr Lennox,' and a frown."

"Impertinent that you are! thus to make yourself sure of me beforehand. I have a great mind to walk home to poor dear Mary, and leave you to do as you can," and Isabella, with a little toss of the head that brought her former haughty self forcibly to the mind of her companion, rose from her seat. But a loving hand restrained her, and she was induced to sit down and listen with a glowing cheek to Frederic's ardent praises of the self-denial and benevolence of which he had heard and seen so much amongst her poorer neighbours.

"What were you saying about poor dear Mary?" asked the lover, after one of those pauses in which silence is eloquence. "Does she still reside with you?"

"Yes, since my poor father's death she has been my only companion, with the exception of a good old lady who lives with me as housekeeper and humble friend. But, oh! Frederic, she is so changed since you saw her. You would not know her now."

"Indeed! What is the matter with her?"

"I do not know, her disorder has puzzled all the doctors. Just about the time when I fell ill, after you, dearest Frederic, had been driven away by my detestable conduct, as I feared for ever, Mary began to lose strength and appetite. Their anxiety about me prevented her state of health coming under observation, and when I in some degree recovered, I found her fearfully altered. She is now wasted almost to a skeleton, and unable to leave her bed."

Frederic appeared to fall into a deep reverie. He at length roused himself with a sigh, for Isabella was gazing upon him with a tender scrutiny, and said,

"I now remember that the good old woman, my hostess, mentioned something of a young lady being ill at your house, but as soon as I ascertained that it was not you, I paid no further attention to the circumstance, being too much occupied in inquiring about her whom I was so anxious to see again. Poor Mary!"

The sun was declining in the heavens before the reconciled lovers became conscious how many hours had passed in blissful communion. Arm-in arm they left the grove, and took their way towards Isabella's dwelling. It was a pretty rustic cottage, and in the summer season a perfect bower of roses and honeysuckles. Now, in the simply laid-out garden, crocuses and snowdrops were giving promise of more brilliant adorning, and the tiny lawn was bordered with budding lilacs, pink hawthorns, and mezerions, and the sweet-scented American currant-tree. But silence reigned in the house—a silence that fell like a horror upon the lovers as they entered. Isabella hastened up-stairs, fearing that her cousin was worse. She found the nurse asleep by the fireside, and the afflicted girl sitting up in bed in a state of the utmost excitement.

"Isabella, who is come with you? I know his step, I know his voice. Isabella, Frederic Lennox is returned, and I am dying! Oh! let me see him once more!" and she stretched out her arms in an agony of supplication.

Isabella was thunderstruck. She had had no idea of this. Mary, then, was dying for love of *her* lover, her Frederic! She had but time to admit the bewildering conviction, for Mary again addressed her with frenzied eagerness.

"Forgive me, Isabella, I am dying. Oh! let me see Frederic once more. I have never, even in intention, injured you. Quick! quick! or it will be too late. Entreat him not to delay. Oh, Isabella! fly, fly!"

Frederic was summoned to the darkened chamber, where youth and happiness were being offered up on the altar of the past. Some murmured words of tenderness, a few tears, a faint pressure of the hand, a fond rapt gaze upon the countenance of the beloved, that gradually subsided into the cold glassy stare of a corpse, and the pure soul had fled to its native heaven, ere those who were around knew that life had departed. A smile still lingered upon the lips, and in that hour of death, beauty returned, an awful beauty, like that of a dreaming archangel.

Isabella gave six months to the memory of the sweet girl who had died for hopeless love of him whom she herself loved with so deep and true an affection. A mild October morning witnessed the union of the tired hearts, whose devotion had survived bitter offence, and change, and sorrow, and harmonised well with the pensive joy of the bride. Isabella was altered, indeed, and a long life passed in the exercise of all the virtues that exalt and endear a wife and mother, proved to her adoring husband how right poor Mary Graham had been in her early judgment of her cousin's character.

JACOB VAN DER NEESS

A ROMANCE

. BY MADAME PAALZOW .

CHAPTER XXI

THESE ten years had produced great alterations in the old house of the Purmurands

Angela's health had long been on the decline, and at length her gentle spirit fled from this world of trial. It was about a year since she had been laid beside her mother, and Floris was left alone to take care of poor old decrepit Susa and of Van der Néess, who had become a great sufferer from the gout, and thus led a miserable life

The death of his wife had proved once more how deep and true had been his affection to her, his frantic despair brought him to the brink of the grave, and poor Floris was obliged to overcome her own bitter sorrow, in order to soothe him by her affectionate attentions and gentle exhortations

Time had somewhat reconciled him to his loss, and restored him to his former self, and, as age and the gout are not calculated to improve such dispositions as his, our readers will not find him more amiable than before

It was the close of an autumn day—Van der Neess was seated in the old banqueting-room, closely wrapped up in furs and blankets, yet the attack of gout, which had given rise to all these precautions, had passed off, and he was in unusual good-humour. As he had become very sensible to the cold, he was wont to indulge himself with a fire in the evenings, even though the spring was now advancing, but, to save expense, generally insisted on having his evening meal prepared in the room, that the fire on the great hearth in the hall might be extinguished

On this evening, as usual, the maid was engaged in that process. Van der Néess had long been tormented by an anxious desire to dismiss her, and would often tear his hair in despair of being able to accomplish this, but his devoted admiration for Floris's taper fingers and delicate complexion withheld him, for he saw no other alternative, in case he sent away the maid, than to charge Floris with her duties, as age and infirmities had rendered Susa imbecile and helpless

Floris, who had just completed her sixteenth year, was seated beside the large oaken table in the middle of the apartment

We cannot tell whether Urica was as beautiful as her young relative at that age, for we did not become acquainted with her till she was about two-and-twenty, but Floris certainly possessed one advantage which Urica did not acquire till after her marriage with Lord Fawcett—the expression of feminine softness, love, and gentleness, which dwelt on her beaming countenance. The atmosphere of purity which she had breathed till the death of her mother, and the anxious solicitude of the latter to guard her from evil, had prevented the bitter, scornful sneer, that once curled Urica's lip, from ever disfiguring Floris's lovely features. Yet she, too, had known sorrow—she had watched beside the sick-bed, and witnessed the decease of her beloved mother, and the deep affliction of her adored aunt, Urica, had made a great impression on her young heart,

for the early development of her mind soon rendered her capable of entering into all the circumstances

She was as tall as her aunt, her figure was graceful and sylph-like, and her sunny hair was disposed in rich braids around her lovely head. The colour varied on her cheek, it was not the steady hue of health, yet the delicacy of this tinge was the admiration of connoisseurs, and its effect was increased by her deep blue eyes, with their black silken lashes and eyebrows

Her attire was rich and elegant. Van der Neess was no longer able to skip and jump about in his excitement, for his legs were crippled and swollen, but he substituted for this very ominous symptom, a practice of drumming on the table with his fingers, and humming or singing in the most repulsive manner. Angela's regular allowance was continued to Floris, through Mynherr van Marseeven's intervention, yet many a time when she appeared before her father in some new article of dress, which she had innocently procured by this means, Van der Neess would utter such strange dissonant sounds, and knock his fingers so fiercely and painfully against the chairs and tables, that those who knew him easily discerned his old inclination to rave and rage to be as strong as ever

But Floris possessed the heavenly gift of cherishing and preserving those feelings which cement the holiest ties of human nature. She was perfectly conscious of all her father's failings, but either did not know, or would not apply the true name to them. The natural impulse of her heart had taught her without any premeditated plan, to bear with him, and treat him with affectionate consideration. She had gained great ascendancy over him and often employed it, partly in jest and partly from motives of filial love and gentle compassion, often urging her opinions with the virtuous pathos of youth—so touching when it is the offspring of a pure and pious heart

Van der Neess would often weep, and writhe in agony like a convicted criminal, when this angel of light stood before him, and with touching earnestness, admonished him to desist from some action or other he had resolved on. On such occasions he would anxiously promise to do all she desired, the relative position of father and child was reversed, yet the blessing of God seemed to rest on this connexion

After such scenes, Floris ever loved her father even better than before, and would strive by every means in her power to prove her affection to him, till at length he seemed ready to go mad with joy. But Floris could not, without a feeling of shame, behold the wild excess of merriment in which he would then indulge, for it fearfully betrayed his coarse nature, and the feelings thus excited threatened to endanger her affection for him more than the primary, and often serious, cause of such a scene

Cornelius Hooft, who bore the most tender love and affection to this lovely girl, was seated beside her. He was ever ready to offer his services to Floris, as a companion and escort, and as she could scarcely cross the streets without attracting admiration, in a manner often both embarrassing and disagreeable, his companionship was very acceptable to her

On the evening in question, Mynherr Hooft was giving Van der Neess and Floris an account of the festivities that had lately taken place at the Hague, on the joint occasion of the English king's return to that city, and the marriage of a niece of the Prince of Orange to Prince George of Anhalt. Floris listened to him, with her sweet angelic smile, and

asked many a question regarding the youthful bride. Cornelius spoke of her beauty, and dwelt on the marked attentions which had been paid her by the king.

"I confess," said Floris, "I feel but little interest about this King Charles. It is well for him I was not the princess, I should soon have showed him he was neglecting his duty, in feasting and dancing away here, while his people are expecting him on the shores yonder, and vainly straining their eyes to catch a glimpse of him."

Van der Néess chuckled and nodded approvingly. He was much pleased at Floris's speech, for he cherished an innate aversion to all spend-thrifts, and at that period not much was known of the young king beyond his propensity to extravagance.

"Well said, my little Floris," cried Néess, "you are quite right, and mark my words, his purse will soon be empty once more. He has just received 50,000*l* sterling. Well, I'm sure, in common justice, not a penny of that money ought to pass out of the country. There are those here who have more right to it than this king himself—50,000*l*! Just ask your aunt Urica whether he has ever redeemed her castles and estates, or repaid the sums she lavished on his cause."

"Father," said Floris, "you know aunt Urica does not wish that to be spoken of, so pray say no more."

"Why not?" cried Van der Néess, abruptly. "Hark! this haughty dame would make one believe she had never done a foolish thing in all her life. I'll tell you why she wants us to hold our tongues, it is that sensible people may not sneer and point at her, and her departed Lord Earl of Fawcett, and say, 'Pride cometh to a fall.'"

"Oh father," said Floris, turning very pale, and resting her head on her hand, "it is not kind of you to wound my feelings so. You know I can never hear you speak harshly of my aunt, or poor dear Lord Fawcett, without being ready to burst into tears."

"Well, well," cried Van der Néess, uneasily, "you know I did not mean to hurt you. You should know better, little, foolish thing. But," cried he in a sudden access of rage, as he saw Floris wiping away her tears, "I *will* say it, that haughty aunt of yours—confound her!—is the bane of all our happiness. What do you cry for, my child? Dry your tears—dry them, I say—for you waste them on those who don't deserve them—who steal your heart from me. There's your aunt, I know, strives every day to wear your affections from me, and to think of you crying now for that earl, who has been dead these ten years, and whom you knew only when you were quite a child! Well, Heaven have mercy on your poor father! I should like to see if you would cry for him when he has been dead ten years."

"Have you lost your senses altogether, Néess?" cried Hooft, indignantly. "Could not you be satisfied when you saw the poor child had dried her tears, but you must needs go on till you make her begin afresh? Inconsiderate, hot-headed old man that you are, will you never learn to control your choleric temper?"

Van der Néess was silent, and cast an uneasy glance at Floris. To divert her attention, Hooft proposed giving her an account of the festivities that were soon to take place in Amsterdam as the young King of England purposed visiting the city, in company with the Prince and Princess of Anhalt. Floris smilingly nodded assent, and rose to

arrange Van der Néess' blankets, as his uneasy movements had displaced them

"I am afraid," said she, looking kindly at him, "you feel cold, my dear father"

"No, no, my darling, no, not in the least," said Neess, in a subdued voice, looking very penitent "Only do give your little, soft, white hand to your poor old father"

Floris immediately ran up to him, threw her arms around his neck, and smiled kindly as she bent over him with filial affection

Hooft cleared his throat, to overcome his emotion, and commenced his narrative He spoke first of the triumphal arches, temples, and pagodas that had been erected on the highway and in the city, and dwelt on a variety of new devices, fantastic dances, and pantomimic shows that had been invented, for the amusement of the visitors At length he came to a favourite plan he had himself suggested, this was, that twenty of the young maidens of Amsterdam, attired in white dresses, with flowing ribbons and flowers, should go out to meet the king and princess and the most beautiful of them be deputed to offer a wreath to the princess

Floris thought this idea charming, without the slightest suspicion that the sly sheriff, well knowing her to be the most beautiful of the maidens, had destined her to this honour She timidly expressed a desire to see this procession, but Van der Néess began to drum loudly on the table, and she forbore to press her request

Hooft went on to speak of the costly presents to be offered by the city to the illustrious visitors, and the sums expended in the magnificent preparations for this visit

Van der Néess listened attentively, for though he thought the whole proceeding absurd in the extreme, he loved to hear of the immense expense it occasioned, and for a moment flattered himself with a hope that all those concerned therein would beggar themselves, and give him—the only rich man who had not spent a doit in such absurdities—the satisfaction of refusing their applications

Floris and Van der Néess at length sat down to their evening repast, yet Hooft lingered He had evidently some design in view, for he spoke of the mildness of the evening, and inquired whether Floris had been out of doors that day On being answered in the negative, he blamed her for her laziness, and declared that must account for her looking so pale

Néess eagerly devoured his soup, now and then casting an uneasy glance at Floris, for he was at least as cunning as Hooft, and at once observed that his drift was to take her out, probably either to her aunt or Madame van Marseeven, and Van der Néess did not by any means relish her visit to either Nothing short of his solicitude regarding Floris's health could induce him to consent to her going, for he did not like her becoming accustomed to so much amusement, yet he could not avoid remarking that, when she returned from such visits, her spirits were raised, and her cheek suffused with a brighter glow

When Van der Néess had finished his supper, Caas, who had grown into a robust young man, entered, to carry him up-stairs to his room This was a most thankless office, for Van der Néess, impatient, and irritated at his helpless condition, bestowed many a hard cuff and harsh imprecation on his ill-fated bearer

"Are you going to bed now Van der Néess?" said Hooft. "Well,

that is very early, the sun has not yet set. It is such a lovely evening, you must let me take Floris to her aunt, that she may have some exercise, and a little air, to colour those pale cheeks of hers."

"What! take Floris out at this hour!" shrieked Van der Néess, impetuously pushing Caas aside, in order to fix a suspicious glance on Floris and her friend. "Nonsense! I cannot allow her to acquire such bad customs and unprofitable habits. Has not she her flowers, her birds, and her lute, to amuse her with? What more can she want?"

"Very true," said Hooft, "but she cannot take sufficient exercise in that little court. And, trust me, that is the reason she is growing so pale and thin. No girl of her age can stand such a life."

Van der Néess was silent, for this speech of Hooft's had weakened the force of his resistance. Our readers must know that this little scene was one of frequent occurrence. Van der Néess never failed to give way at last, after he had indulged himself in venting his irritation on Hooft, but the latter turned a deaf ear to all his offensive speeches, and would not suffer himself to be put out of temper, while Floris rewarded him for his forbearance with one of her sweetest smiles.

On this occasion, as usual, she wound up the scene by approaching her father, and kissing his coarse hand, saying, with an angelic smile, as she wished him good night, "You give me leave to go, don't you, dear father?"

Van der Néess screwed up his face as if a sudden twinge of the gout had seized him, or Caas laid hold of him too rudely, muttered something to himself, and sighed, but made no further objections. However, when Caas carried him up stairs, and put him to bed, he desired him not to dawdle away his time in the house, but to make haste and follow his young mistress, and see that she came home in safety.

It was a long way to the Countess of Fawcett's, for she had taken up her residence in one of the suburbs of the city.

Mynheer van Marseveen had succeeded in obtaining from the young king an acknowledgment of Urica's claims, yet, hitherto, no settlement had been made. In consequence, Urica had sold her palace, at the Hague, and all her jewels. After making a handsome present to the Countess Comenes, for whom she procured the situation of governess to the Princess of Orange, she purchased a small house and garden on the outskirts of the town, and lived there with a few old faithful domestics, on the slender proceeds of her little capital.

Floris's visits ever occasioned her the greatest delight, for the warm affection and tender sympathy of this lovely girl soothed her wounded heart. There was still the same grace and poetry of motion about Floris, as, when in the days of childish delusion, she danced in the moonshine, and her light step scarce left a trace upon the damp sand along which she was walking.

At length she arrived with her conductor at the place of her destination, and, lifting the latch of a little wicker gate, they entered a low avenue shaded by young beech-trees, whose branches were drawn across a slight frame-work and arched overhead. A lady in deep mourning was walking down this avenue, in whom our readers would with difficulty recognise the once haughty and dazzling Countess Urica.

Her step was slow, and betrayed great bodily weakness, yet her figure was erect, and her manner noble and dignified as ever, a sweet melan-

choly smile lit up her pale countenance, as she perceived Floris, and she kindly sought to dispel the uneasiness the latter expressed regarding her health. Every succeeding month of May seemed to weaken the frail thread of her life—for it was the anniversary of Lord Fawcett's execution—and poor Floris was shocked at the ravages sad recollections had this time made in Urica's appearance.

To divert her attention from such melancholy considerations, Urica kindly expressed a desire to hear an account of the approaching festivities in the city, and Hooft recommenced his narratives. When he came to his plan of the procession of maidens, Urica applauded the ingenuity of the idea, and Floris began to consider who among her acquaintances would be selected for this purpose. Madame van Marseeven's two unmarried daughters were naturally the first she remembered, but she never thought of being among them herself.

"Certainly," said Hooft, "Madame van Marseeven's daughters will be of the party, provided their mother's situation does not become more critical."

"Is there any reason to fear that?" said Urica, in a sympathising tone. "Gracious God! will she depart before me?"

"The physicians think her days are numbered," replied Hooft, "yet she does not suffer much. She is seldom confined to her bed, and has the perfect use of her understanding. But her daughters dislike joining in any amusement, and are loath to leave their mother for a moment, while Van Marseeven has been pestered every day with applications for his daughters' assistance, and you may imagine how his heart revolts at all these festivities for the bustle of these preparations often obliges him to be long absent from his wife, and he hears of nothing but joy and hilarity while he is heart-broken at the thought of his approaching separation from his noble and excellent wife. Indeed, if you have not seen him during the last few weeks, you would scarcely recognise him, he is so much altered in appearance."

"Yet," resumed Hooft, after a pause, "Madame van Marseeven is the same kind considerate person as ever, and anxious to divert the thoughts of her sorrowing husband and children, she enters into all these plans and arrangements, and, guided by the refined taste for which she has ever been distinguished, suggests many in alteration and improvement in the plan of proceeding. She also charged me to speak to you about persuading Van der Næss to allow Floris to take a part in these festivities, as we have chosen her to offer the wreath to the princess."

"Me, Mynherr Hooft?" cried Floris, both pleased and alarmed. "Are you serious? What right have I to such an honour? you know I cannot boast of high birth, nor is my father one of the great merchants or bankers of the city."

"Hum," said Cornelius, with a significant smile, "that won't be any difficulty in this case, the qualifications required are of a somewhat different nature, but you need not disturb yourself on that point. Madame van Marseeven would not have thought of you had there been any objection, and further, I must tell you, that her husband named you to the committee appointed to conduct the festivities, and his proposal was unanimously agreed to."

"But," continued Floris, "there is my youngest cousin Van Marseeven, who is both noble and beautiful, and but little older than I am, she

would be a more suitable person, and depend upon it all the old families in town would deem it an outrage to their daughters, if a girl like me, who can neither plead high birth nor an ancient name, were to receive the preference. I know how much importance they attach to such things, for I have often heard those girls talk of them at Madame van Marseveen's house, whenever she was not present. What do you say to all this, aunt Urica?"

"Why," said the latter smiling, "if it come to talk of such unimportant things as birth and connexions, you may plead your relationship to two of the most distinguished families in the land, for you know your grandmother, my sister, was a Casambort, and Madame van Marseveen, also, is a near relation of mine, therefore it is very probable they have considered you as belonging to the ancient families of the town."

"My poor father!" said Floris, thoughtfully. "Do you know, aunt, it always makes me sad to hear these things spoken of—it is not the first time, for while poor Susa had the use of her understanding she was always harping on the same string. But you cannot think how sad I felt when I looked at my poor father, I thought she wished to tear me from him, and he appeared to me so forlorn and deserted. I loved him all the more in the anxiety of my heart, for was not I his true and lawful child who bore his name? And yet it appeared she wished me to think myself above him, who loved me so fondly, and has ever been so kind to me, how wicked that would have been! I can scarcely think it possible, and neither you nor my mother ever dreamed of hinted at such a thing."

"Your noble-minded mother was far superior to me in that respect," said Urica, with generous candour. "It was from her I learnt to view your situation in its true light. I confess I was once on the point of committing a serious error, but her purity and virtuous firmness preserved me from it. I see she has implanted a right feeling in your mind, nature impels you to love your father, and your disposition has not been polluted by the vain frivolous aspirations of the world."

"I can easily imagine that you would agree with my mother," returned Floris, "but you must stand by me in this matter, for I am determined not to accept this honourable distinction, if it is bestowed on me in consideration of my high connexions. If the daughter of my poor father, Van der Néess, is not eligible to the honour, the niece of the Countess Fawcett will not stir from your side."

"What do you say to that, Hooft?" exclaimed Urica, glancing at Floris with proud satisfaction. "Don't you admire such noble pride?"

Hooft, as usual, was in a transport of admiration, and could scarcely command his emotion.

"Hem," said he, clearing his throat with an effort as he settled his cravat, "the girl is not aware how completely she betrays her high descent by such feelings. My noble, high minded, Floris," he said, unable to disguise his emotion, "do not give yourself any uneasiness on this subject—we all know we must not address you by any other title than Floris van der Néess, so now, my little proud spirit, listen to me! The sheriff, Cornelius Hooft, is deputed by the good city of Amsterdam to request Miss Floris van der Néess, daughter of the merchant Jacob van der Néess, will be pleased to take a part in the approaching festivities, and present a wreath to the princess, with an address befitting the occasion."

Hooft delivered himself of this speech with mock gravity, and accom-

pamied it with a series of deferential bows and humorous gestures Floris, infinitely amused at this, dropped a low curtesy and replied in the same style, and, though she spoke half in jest, what she said might have been repeated to the high functionaries of Amsterdam as a modest and fitting reply to their invitation

"That is to say," she added, in conclusion, "provided the good old merchant, Jacob Van der Neess, will give his consent to his daughter's accepting this invitation"

"Oh ' I'll answer for him '—leave that to me, dear Floris," said Hooft, "and, to morrow, you must go to Madame van Marseeven's house and get your measure taken for your dress of white silk, then, with a white veil, and a net of pearls on your head, and a sprig of orange blossoms twined in among the braids of your hair, you, little rogue ' will look so bewitching, that even our old hearts will dance with joy, and your young admirers must lose theirs altogether"

Floris smiled, but, as she turned to Ulla, she was struck by the air of exhaustion on her pale features Ulla, her faithful maid, made some very intelligible signs to Floris from behind her mistress's chair, expressing her desire that the latter should be left alone now, and Floris, fearful of exciting her aunt too much, took an affectionate leave of her, and returned home under the escort of Hooft and Caas, whom she found stationed at the gate

Hooft was mistaken in imagining that Van der Neess would readily give his consent to his daughter's joining one of the deputation of maidens, for many an angry scene resulted from the sheriff's urgent application Though Van der Neess was flattered by the distinction conferred on his daughter, and the tacit conviction thus expressed, that she was the most beautiful maiden in the city, and though he loved her so dearly, and anticipated with ridiculous delight the idea of seeing her so beautifully dressed, these feelings struggled with his anxious fear of incurring expense, and attracting too much attention to his wealth

But Hooft, perceiving at length that there was no reasoning the miser out of his miserable objections, settled the matter by threatening him with the severe displeasure of the chief burgomaster, in case he demurred any longer Jacob said no more, and Floris repaired to Madame van Marseeven's house, to have her measure taken, in company with her cousins, for the dresses to be worn on this occasion

It would be scarcely possible to imagine a more lovely sight than Floris on the morning of the eventful day, when resplendent with youth and beauty she entered the gloomy old banqueting room, where her father was seated We have before alluded to the judicious choice of attire prescribed on this occasion, but it was not equally becoming to all who wore it, for none had so many charms to increase its effect as Floris

The orange blossoms, with their dark leaves, were entwined with much taste in the braids of her sunny hair, which, descending on her soft cheek, was then disposed at the back of her head beneath a net of pearls, from which a veil of the most transparent gauze descended through a ring over her shoulders, and mingled with the folds of her white silk dress

Van der Neess, of his own accord, produced Angela's pearls and wept aloud for joy when he saw his darling adorned with them, but he made her bend down again and again to examine the magnificent clasps of the necklace and bracelets, and assure himself they were well fastened.

He said he was sure she would not bring back these ornaments with her, but charged her, in case they were lost or stolen, to say they were not hers, but her aunt Urica's. His anxiety was so great that, when Floris was gone, he sent Caas after her with a last exhortation, "to be sure and feel for the clasps of her pearls very often, because he was seriously afraid he should never see them again," and the breathless messenger reached her just as she was descending from the carriage at Madame van Marseeven's door.

Floris and her companions were stationed without the city gates, in order to avoid being annoyed by the curiosity of the mob that crowded the streets. A number of orange-trees and flowering shrubs had been transported thither, so as to form a mimic grove, and beneath its shade the beautiful maidens awaited the arrival of the illustrious guests. This was a happy thought, for it had been previously arranged that they should descend from their carriages at this place, to partake of some refreshment, and thus they gained full leisure to receive the addresses and offerings of the nymphs of this moveable grove.

At length the royal visitors arrived. The Princess of Anhalt entered the refreshing shade of the bosquet, walking between the King of England and her young husband.

"What an enchanting sight!" she cried, looking round in delighted surprise. "Can these be mortals, or are they angels from heaven?"

"These are the wonders," said the king, in ecstasy, "which Holland alone can bring forth—a specimen of its unparalleled beauties. Gracious princess, accept the homage of your countrywomen!"

"No, no," replied the princess, bowing to the king, "I have no right to that. It is due to our honoured guest, who so justly deserves the homage of ladies, and so well knows how to value it."

"Oh, what heavenly beauties these are!" cried the king, quite enraptured at the sight of so much loveliness. "I pray you advance, follow that lovely girl who offers to lead you on, and take me with you. I would give old England for a smile from those lips."

The princess courteously gave her hand to the king, and followed the train of young maidens, who, led on by Floris, danced on before them, till they arrived at a bowler of roses, where seats had been provided for them.

The king was then about thirty years of age. He was of the middle height and strongly built, and his manner and demeanour were less those of a king than of a gallant cavalier. His features were finely formed, and the auspicious change in his fortune had given a lively and happy expression to his countenance. His rich black hair fell in a profusion of curls over his neck and shoulders, according to the fashion of the cavaliers, introduced by him. He was sumptuously dressed, and had the most winning courtesy and affability of manner, so that his first appearance was calculated to efface the disadvantageous impression so justly created against him by report.

Floris was in the same predicament as a child who sees a drawing of some animal it has been taught to fear. Her imagination had conjured up such a frightful picture of the king, that when he was actually before her she did not know him, and looked around in search of this object of terror, while at the same time she felt much interested by the appearance of the handsome young man beside the princess. She was pleased

at the favourable impression she had evidently made on him, and felt that his presence inspired her with confidence in approaching the princess. The excitement of the moment lent a richer glow to her lovely cheek, and the modest dignity with which she delivered her address to the princess enchanted all the spectators.

When she had finished speaking, she knelt down before the princess, and placed the wreath in her lap, but the latter bent forward, and said, with a gracious smile, "Will not you allow me to give your beautiful offering to him who, I know, would have so gladly received it from your hands?"

Floris blushed, and was at a loss what to reply, but when the king bent forward to receive the gift, and gazed on Floris with his most winning smile, she said, timidly, "I have not another."

"Well, that is an additional reason for offering him this one," returned the princess. "Will your majesty permit me to present it to you?"

Charles stretched out his hand to receive it, but Floris, unable to suppress her astonishment, coloured up to the temples, and then, turning very pale, exclaimed,

"The king!—is that the King of England?"

"Yes, my fair maiden" replied the princess. "Did not you know him?"

Floris was so confused that she was unable to reply, all her old prepossessions against the King of England flashed upon her memory—his ingratitude and injustice to the families of those who had sacrificed themselves in his service, and in particular to her beloved Urica, and she stood for a moment lost in the painful recollections this subject suggested.

Thus absorbed, she had not noticed that the royal party had risen from their seats and proceeded towards their carriages, followed by her companions, and suddenly looking round, found herself standing alone in the midst of a set of Charles II's courtiers, who, attracted by her beauty, had gathered round her, and were gazing on her with looks of impertinent curiosity. She immediately attempted to join her companions, but one or two cavaliers placed themselves so as to impede her progress, and, attributing her emotion on hearing the king's name to a different cause, addressed her in a tone of bantering familiarity and highflown compliment, so offensive to Floris, that she with difficulty refrained from bursting into tears. However, making an effort to command herself, she merely requested her persecutors to allow her to pass and regain her post.

"By St George, you are very cruel to wish to run away from us so soon!" cried one. "You should not be in such a hurry to rejoin that flock of pigeons, for you eclipse them all, and though you may not find a royal admirer here, there's many a good-looking fellow amongst us who would give his existence for one of your bewitching little smiles, and a kiss from those sweet rosy lips," so saying, he advanced towards her with a confident air.

Floris looked round in despair.

"Oh!" she cried, clasping her hands, "is there no one here who will protect me from such insults?"

As she spoke, her eye fell on a young cavalier who stood at a little distance gazing intently upon her and who now joined the group. His

appearance had the immediate effect of inspiring Floris with hope and confidence. His figure was tall, and his demeanour sober and dignified, a profusion of rich brown hair clustered around his lofty brow, and his pale, thoughtful countenance was lit up by a dark beaming eye, which bore an expression of deep feeling. Floris fixed an imploring look upon him, and her lips parted as if to speak, but a strange emotion, for which she could not account to herself, deprived her of the power of utterance. Yet the stranger understood her meaning, and the expression of interest and kindness on his countenance told Floris he would be her deliverer. In another moment he was by her side, and grasping the arm of the cavalier who had spoken last, he said,

"Excuse me, my Lord of Laneric, but you should not teach this young lady to believe these to be English manners, we should beware of confirming the unfavourable opinion report has procured for us abroad."

The clear, firm voice in which he pronounced those words stung the cavalier to the quick.

"It is possible, my lord," he replied, in a scornful tone, "that your manners may differ from ours, for, while we have faithfully followed our king through dangers and privations in his wanderings through foreign lands, you have preferred staying at home, and lounging over women's spinning-wheels, till the hour of his return, which has cost you no further trouble than to cross the channel and receive the king whom we have protected."

"Earl of Laneric" returned the other, calmly, "you pronounce judgment against yourself, were easy to prove to you that those alone had the right of recalling their king who stood up for his rights at home, and maintained them at the risk of their lives, but this is no fitting time for such discussions, nor do I feel any desire to have strife with those whom our exertions have enabled to return to their homes. Yet permit me to remark, that our English manners, which, perhaps, from this cause may be more present to my memory than yours, enjoin us to protect every defenceless female from insult."

Thus saying, he offered his arm to Floris, and, without listening to the muttered retort of the cavalier, led her to her companions.

The king was in the act of assisting the princess into her carriage when Floris approached.

"Ah, beautiful maiden," he said, "you tarried so long that I feared you had deserted us altogether. I envy you, my Lord Fawcett," he added, addressing the young noble, "for being so fortunate as to engage this young lady's attention."

"Fawcett!" cried Floris, letting go his arm in extreme surprise, "Fawcett!" she repeated, in accents of delight, "is it possible? Are you indeed related to the late Earl of Fawcett?"

"I am his son," said the young man, equally surprised, "and I shall attach a new value to this title if it will give me a claim on your regard."

"Then," continued Floris, who scarcely heard these last words, "then you are, you must be, Lord Henry Fawcett, my dear aunt Urica's stepson!"

"Is this young lady a relation of yours, my lord?" interrupted the king.

"I was not aware of it till this moment," replied the young noble, who

had not yet recovered from his surprise, "but I shall feel highly honoured if she will grant the Earl of Fawcett any rights of relationship."

"I have no doubt of that," replied the king with a smile. He had no time to say more, for Floris, pursuing the train of her own thoughts, exclaimed in a tone of innocent delight,

"My dear kind aunt Urica! What a happy surprise it will be for her to see you! But," she continued, turning to the young man, "did you know your noble father's widow was living here?"

"I hoped to find her here," said Lord Henry, but he stopped short, for he felt the time and place ill-suited to any indulgence of feeling, he marked the ironical smiles and whispers of the spectators, and even then felt that Floris had acquired a sacred clum to his interest.

He, therefore, silently assisted her into the princess's state carriage, where, by the desire of the latter, a place had been reserved for Floris and her cousin, Bella van Marseeven, and then mounted his horse to take his place in the king's train, as the chief dignitaries of the city had, in the mean time, invited his majesty to proceed towards the palace.

A few moments' delay occurred ere the procession set forward, while all the company took the places assigned to them. Floris was delighted to find herself beside her cousin. As she glanced timidly around, she caught sight of Lord Fawcett at a little distance from the rest, apparently wholly absorbed in gazing at her.

As the sun shone full on his face she thought him even handsomer than before, though he looked paler and more thoughtful, and she felt that the recollections she had cherished from her childhood did not deceive her for this youth, though he lacked the ardour and brilliant manner of his father, strikingly resembled him in appearance.

Her early love for his father, and her warm affection for Urica, contributed to increase the interest with which he had inspired her. When the carriage at length drove on, and he made her a profound bow, her emotion was so great that she knew not how to thank him, except by laying her hand on her heart.

Floris had anticipated the greatest pleasure from this festival, but now all her feelings were changed. Sigh after sigh escaped her oppressed heart, the tears were ready to start into her eyes, and, in the excitement of her mind, she could not tell whether she felt supremely happy or utterly wretched. She now no longer took an interest in things for their own sakes. The novelty and variety of the scene had suddenly ceased to possess charms for her, she gazed dreamily on the gay festive throng till it seemed to change into a confused mass. All the devices resorted to for the amusement of the illustrious visitors failed to excite attention or interest in her, she seemed dead to all around—till, suddenly, the cavalcade of English gentlemen appeared in view beside the carriage. A deep blush tinged her cheek, and an exclamation of surprise burst from her lips when the purple velvet mantle of the young Earl of Fawcett was blown against the open carriage in which she sat, and, on looking up, she caught his eye fixed upon her, though he was speaking to the king. Thenceforward he rode within view, and Floris felt irresistibly impelled to watch that pale countenance, and discover whether its melancholy expression could be chased by a smile, and it was only when she saw a smile there that she glanced eagerly around to ascertain the cause.

The young earl seemed to feel himself under a similar obligation, for he, too, sought to obtain a view of Floris's countenance, and, when they caught each other in a smile, it would have been hard for them to say whether the cause existed in external objects or in themselves, yet one thing was certain—Lord Henry impatiently longed for the end of this interminable ride, and determined, as soon as he should be at liberty, to repair to his step-mother, though not long before he had been entreated to give a promise to the contrary, and had once been on the point of doing so.

A magnificent banquet was given at the town-hall on this occasion. As it was the first at which Floris had ever been present, it naturally had the effect of diverting her thoughts, especially as her beauty excited universal admiration. The king, who had been so much struck by her charms in the morning, treated her with marked courtesy, and claimed her hand for a dance. The young Prince of Anhalt followed his example, and entered into a serious interesting conversation with Floris, which pleased her far better than the gay railery and ironical remarks of the king, who loved to question the innocence of the ladies with whom he conversed, in order to allow full scope to his unrestrained and free style of speech.

Wherever she moved the Earl of Fawcett seemed to hover around, as if to protect her in this crowd, and, as he did not dance himself, he eagerly seized every opportunity between the dances to speak to her.

Their conversation insensibly turned to a subject of painful and engrossing interest to them both, but they soon felt that it was of too affecting a nature for the present occasion, for Floris twice rose to join the dance, with tears in her beautiful eyes. Thus they strove to talk of other things, but when they dwelt on the strange circumstances of their unexpected meeting, it was with great emotion they perceived the similarity of their feelings. Lord Fawcett owned that Floris had excited his attention long before she had observed him, and that he had contemplated her with a degree of surprise and emotion inexplicable to himself, for which he could now account by her striking resemblance to his step-mother, whose remembrance he had cherished from his boyish days.

Floris innocently confessed that she, too, had felt a strange interest at first seeing him, which she could not understand till she had heard his name, and felt that his features recalled the remembrance of one who had been the idol of her childhood.

As she spoke thus, the animation of her manner rendered her inexpressibly lovely, and the emotion she betrayed in talking of his father, gave her an additional charm in Fawcett's eyes.

Ere Floris left the banquet she had made an appointment to meet him again at her aunt Urica's, for she declined receiving him at her father's house, with a species of anxiety for which she could not account even to herself.

The Legend of the Timonel

BY DUNCAN CRAIG

I

A Spanish Ship lies becalmed off the Cuban Shore, at Close of Day
 On! pleasant is the sun when his daily course is run,
 And when his burning beams have sunk beneath the wave
 But hideous is dark night, when it loometh in its might,
 And ghostly forms surround, and there is none to save
 Then specters of the gloom, like specters from the tomb,
 Upon the surging wave crests, like restless demons dance,
 Whilst sails are struggling hard, from out the groaning yard,
 And morning winds, resistless, upon the waves advance

This night upon the waters the sun has sunk to sleep
 Beneath the hissing waves of the Caribbean deep
 A goodly vessel lies becalmed, her rustling sails faint creak,
 And listless hangs the golden flag, that droopeth from the peak

A sail! a sail! swift heaves in sight, along the wooded shore
 She saileth as no mortal craft has ever sailed before,
 But broken is her black hull and torn the canvas sail,
 And tottering are her tumbled masts as if in wintry gale

Loud booms the thunder's roll upon each pillid soul
 And flashes now the lightning is the stronger druid's spell,
 But terror crisped each heart, as if no more 'twould part
 When a hundred demon yells o'er the dulling waters fly

Still near the goodly merchantman the black ship scuddeth past
 No gale of moaning wind could drive her on so fast
 No sound of human voice was like that demon cry,
 Which rung full o'er the waters, as she swiftly darted by

II

An Old Pilot cometh off to the Spanish Ship

Oh! golden and bright is the dazzling sun light,
 When it glides the blue waves forming crest,
 And the sea breeze's stave rings o'er the wave,
 As it kisses the shore it loves best
 Then the pilot canoe, o'er the deep calm and blue,
 To the Spaniard glides swift through the tide,
 Quick! the canvas unbrail! let the wind fill her sail!
 And the studding sails tower o'er her side!

III

The Pilot inquireth concerning the Gloom which hangeth o'er the Crew
 "What, ho! ye Spanish mariners, ye seem in no great glee,
 Unlike men sailing safely o'er the Caribbean sea,
 What have ye seen that frights ye thus? Come now, dispel this gloom,
 Or have ye met the phantom ship, or goblin from the tomb?"

IV

The Master answereth the Timonel

Quick up arose the master, then, a stately man and old
 "Come ' listen to me Timonel, our fright I will unfold,
 For we have seen a phantom craft, and heard a demon yell
 Good saints' it pall's my spirit now the very thing to tell
 But as he spoke, a shudd'ring strong convuls'd the pilot's frame
 "Ave Maria' well I know th'it very vessel's name' .

V

The Timonel telleth his Legend

" 'Twas just about the sun rise hour, full twenty years, nay more,
 I went to guide a merchantman outside the Cuban shore,
 And three long hours I stay'd in her, when lo' it blew a gale,
 And, then, amid the tempest roar, we saw a stranger sail
 But when the wind had left us, at even of the day,
 Upon the surging ocean, a helpless log we lay

VI

The Pirate attacketh the Merchant Ship

Then quickly flew the pirate, longside our broken hull,
 With many a buccineer her quarter deck was full
 Like desperate men we beat them back into the waters dark
 There many a pirate bleaching lies a banquet for the shark
 Alas' alas' 'twas no avail our gallant crew lay dead,
 With reeking gore our upper deck was wet and crimson red,
 And seven corpses stark and stiff the setting sun survived,
 The last of all our mariners, each one where he was laid,
 For me alone the pirates spared of all that gallant crew,
 And they, ' We'll leave you company to cheer you all night thorough
 Your other comrades slumber now within their wat'ry bier,
 These seven will not trouble you by talking much we fear

VII

The Pirates Sail away Quick In

With bitter jeer and many a cheer the pirates sailed afar
 And I then loos'd the topsail from out the creaking spar,
 To raise those gory corpses 'then with all my might I tried
 But I was faint, from loss of blood and sat me down and cried

VIII

But lo' at Sunset, those Seven Dead Corpses sprung up again, and tread the Deck

But when the sun his course had run, and sunk 'neath ocean's breast,
 Those dreary sailors, one by one, sprung upward from their rest
 With moaning shriek and hideous creak they pace the quarter deck,
 Ah' little do that ghastly crew their living pilot reck,
 Save one, he was the master once he laugh'd right drearily
 Good saints' my spirits in me sank with fright so wearily,
 My heart was ice my blood ran cold, with anguish and with dread,
 Oh, heavens' it is a fearful thing to mate thus with the dead

Loud laughed that ghastly mariner, ah! loudly laughed he,
 And at the sound, a moaning came deep rushing o'er the sea
 Pale faces then fierce glared at me behind the luard shroud,
 The moon uprose and gazed right down, athwart a silver cloud,
 Our swelling courses floated proud, before the moaning wind,
 Save mine, there were no living hands, the veering helm to mind
 But darker grew the night, and wilder my affright,
 As in the murky light of the lurid lightning glare,
 I heard the gibb'ring tone of the corpses' feeble moan,
 And marked their eye balls roll, with fierce and angry stare
 Then up the shrouds they run, from the top yards one by one,
 They loose the dark brown sailcloth to the rushing of the wind
 Then onward scuds she fast, like light the shores are past
 Whilst strains the bending mast 'neath the canvas unconfin'd

IX

He takes the Boat and makes for the Coast

But when the cheerful morning broke, I took the boat and oar,
 And made right swiftly onward, towards the verdant Hazy shore
 Alas! that ghostly mariner, he standeth on the bow
 'Come back! come back!' I must obey, full wearily I trow
 I reach the ship, upon her deck I cry, with bitter tears,
 Unto that blessed God, who humblest moaning hears
 Down sweeps the rushing wind, through Mona's passage now,
 Like slender reeds, the tapering spars, before the storm blast bow
 Our ghastly load are hush'd in death, their vigils they'll renew,
 When fearful night once more looks down upon their ludicrous crew
 Oh, heavens! it is a fearful thing, to sit in dire despair,
 Whilst round the sea birds gently float, as light as summer air,
 To feel so lone, midst ocean's moan, before a corpse's stare,
 To find his eye balls fix'd on you, with gloom and hateful glare
 And then, when night looms down on you beneath those stony eyes,
 Whilst rolls the stormy blast around, to see the dead arise

X

At last a Ship takes him off from the Phantom Craft, which still Sallets on,
 and will for ever Sail

A sail! a sail! oh, blessed hope! she comes before the wind,
 Expecting scarce in such a craft a living man to find
 They lower a boat—they pull again, full o'er the raging tide
 I quick leap in—they gaze at me, we gain the vessel's side
 Yet still that phantom ship sails on, she never can be late
 To fright the weary mariner, with sad and ghastly freight,
 When sinks the sun, his blazing beams beneath the waters deep
 When silent is the tropic wave, and 'hush'd the wind in sleep!"

THE CONFEDERATES, OR, THE DAYS OF MARGARET OF PARMÁ

AN HISTORICAL ROMANCE

CHAPTER XII

IN a retired cabinet of the *Palais de la Cour* sat the Duchess Regent, with her two favourite advisers—the wise and prudent president, Viglius de Aytta, and the Count of Barlaimont. Years had not diminished the forbidding traits of her aspect. The rude hand of time had deepened into furrows the harsh lines of her countenance. Her brow was thoughtful, and her eye was stern. There was about her an air of decision more in harmony with her superior talents than with her sex. Her costume, too, betrayed none of that minute attention to trifles which forms one of the graces of woman, be her station what it may. Not but she knew, when occasion required it, how to don the jewelled robe but a disregard to the mere trivial circumstances of outward show, when not subservient to her higher aims—an austere simplicity was most consonant with her own genius. A plain black dress, and a black mantilla flung over her head and shoulders, completed her attire, and no ornament but a tressy of beads, of alternate ebony and ivory, terminated by the image of our Saviour on the cross, was visible on any part of her person. Papers and letters, amongst which a missal lay half concealed, covered the table before her, each and all bearing traces of having been perused. The room was otherwise bare, for the eye that either turned towards heaven, or sought to penetrate and guide the passions of the multitude, had neither leisure nor care to rest on minor objects.

The president of the privy council was a man declining in years and in strength, the expression of whose features, sharpened by age, would have betrayed to a physiognomist a timid, vacillating disposition, whilst in his younger companion an air of frank boldness, not unmingled with arrogance, bespoke one whose step would be firm let him tread what path he pleased. The princess was very pale, but no other trace of emotion was visible as she explained to her councillors her reasons for having called them to this secret conference.

“These things,” continued she, “must not be hastily laid before the council. Few of its members, alas! are to be trusted. We must have time to consider and reconsider the imminence of the danger, and the best means to parry it. We must, in short, be completely armed at all points before we appear before those who are, at best, but doubtful friends, if they be not actual enemies. What think you of this, Barlaimont?”

“I can but repeat, your grace, what I have already said. The whole of this affair is got up to intimidate government. There is nothing in it—nothing, that is, of sufficient moment to disturb your highness.”

“Nay, but I tell you,” urged the princess, somewhat impatiently, “it is a real, fast spreading conspiracy, headed by men of talent, boasting names that are calculated to mislead the multitude. I tell you my sources of intelligence are not to be doubted—they are various, yet all agree in the main tenor. Nay, many Knights of the Golden Fleece are said to be amongst them.”

"Believe it not, gracious lady," exclaimed Barlaumont, indignantly "Treason cannot abide amongst us I will venture to say thus much for the honourable order of which I am a poor member Pray, gracious lady, do not suffer so groundless an imputation to dwell upon your mind"

The princess shook her head incredulously

"Can your grace fully, implicitly rely upon the sources of such information?" asked the cautious Viglius "It seems to me improbable, to say the least"

"I tell you," repeated the princess, "there can be no doubt A wide-extended conspiracy is formed Here, gentlemen, is the letter, by which Enderlecht, the *maitre d'hotel* of the trusty Count of Meghen, informs me how the traitors sought to inveigle him amongst them See, here are the names he has transcribed First on the list stands John of Marnix, lord of Thoulouse, a man of much daring and enterprise, together with some military skill, he lives at Breda, too, under the shadow of the Prince of Orange's wing Here are, also, many abbots, whose names it would too much grieve me to repeat Hamez, too—Hamez, *tonson d'or*—the herald of your order, Barlaumont, is said to be among the foremost But what seems more threatening still, Lefdal, Baron, and Ghisbert, three gentlemen of the Count of Egmont's household, Louis of Nassau, young Mansfelt——"

"The father of this last-named gentleman," interrupted Viglius, "knows nothing of such matters, even if his son have suffered his headlong youth to hurry him into the snare The Count of Mansfelt is loyal"

"And the Prince of Orange too prudent," said Barlaumont, "the Count of Egmont too noble, to know right of this Hair brained youths, like Louis of Nassau and young Mansfelt, may, indeed, be misled for a day, but even that I do not believe"

"Nay, but listen," continued the princess "Brederode has put himself at their head"

"A licentious, unprincipled man" said Barlaumont, disdainfully

"His name, however," observed Viglius, "is not without a charm for the people Of this, your highness, we had some notion before"

"Yes, but what I have to unfold is worse than confirmation," said the princess "You have not yet heard all my budget of news To the names of Brederode and Cuylenbourg is added a long list of those whose rank, talents, and credit on the public mind make them formidable Here are dozens of letters I have received in the course of a few days, all tending to the same point Some of these are of a friendly, warning nature, others, mysterious and threatening Many are by unknown hands Most accuse the Princes of Orange and of Gavres, and the Grand Admiral de Horn, of befriending and even making part of this association"

"I never can believe it," said Barlaumont, with energy

"Time will show," answered Margaret "Do not forget that the Prince of Orange was a Protestant in his childhood, that he renounced his faith because it was the will of my gracious father, the late emperor, that he should do so, but his marriage with a Protestant princess, his admitting of a Protestant chapel and chaplain within his household, his having chosen princes of that faith to be sponsors to his Catholic son, are so many reasons for doubting his truth to the Mother Church And

if that be doubted, if he be not faithful to his God, how shall he be faithful to his king?"

"Nay, but your highness forgets," said Vighus, when Margaret paused, "that he had desired to become the husband of the Princess of Lorraine—an alliance which, if permitted, would have bound him doubly to the church and the sovereign."

"He desired, too, the place I unworthily fill," replied the princess, haughtily. "Perhaps, had the king furthered his ambition in all things, he might have bought him over to become a faithful ally."

"Better a faithful ally than a troublesome subject or a powerful enemy," said Vighus. "It might have been better to soothe than to irritate. But the evil is done, and the Prince of Orange cannot be trusted."

"No!" exclaimed the princess, vehemently, "nor do we trust him! The Count of Egmont, too, is but a hollow friend to the holy cause of religion. The brothers of his wife have renounced the true faith, and he did not scruple, at one time, to insult the king in his chosen minister, the purple of Rome in one of his representatives, to force from my side the wise Granvella—wise, for he knew them well. No, no, I trust them not Orange and Egmont, nor will I ever!"

"Whatever their secret feelings may be," observed Vighus, "they are not likely to have compromised themselves recklessly, as Brederode appears to have done."

"Here," said the princess, pushing a heap of papers towards them. "Look, gentlemen—read—examine."

Whilst Bailiament and Vighus busied themselves with a hasty perusal of some of the documents Margaret rapidly ran her eye through others, evidently studied before, from which she seemed anxious to glean fresh information. Having looked over a few, she turned to Vighus.

"Well, president, what do you say to these things?"

"My opinion is," said the old man, slowly, and meditatively, "that half these informations are furnished by the confederates themselves, and are false, that they have dared to make use of noble names to impose upon the people, whose owners will take care, very shortly, to clear themselves of the imputations so artfully cast upon them. What is more alarming, is their endeavouring to gain over the towns and the merchants."

"In Antwerp, more especially," said the princess, "I understand they have many friends, and some, too, of a dangerous spirit. We have no men, no money, to support us in a struggle, if such be called for, and the king, my brother, does not wholly trust me. He does not act immediately upon my representations and according to my necessities, but consults, and hesitates, until it is too late to strike the blow which might, if promptly dealt, have nipped many an evil in the bud. I am not able, not free to act as I would, and yet I bear all the responsibility of a free agent. I cannot conciliate by granting, I cannot check by timely severity, and yet the king expects me to keep the Netherlands as quiet as if he himself were present. The people, in the mean time, look up to me for protection, and every party expects to derive advantage from an interference, the force of which they seek to limit by all the means in their power. Never was a situation more difficult, more trying. Oh, my poor aunt, little did you foresee the dilemma in which I now find myself!"

"Perhaps your highness sees the storm gathering when the clouds are but drifting before the wind," said Viglius.

"You cannot yet judge," said Margaret. "You know not all Brederode is too bold not to be powerful. He has sought, and, it is confidently asserted, has found the means of establishing an alliance with the Protestant princes of France and Germany. The heretics cling to each other from land to land, with a tenacity which they feel necessary to a bad cause. The Dukes of Cleves and Saxony, and Prince Schwartzberg, are said to be favourable to them. Coligni is their friend together with many others whom it would be too long to enumerate. Brederode no longer shuns the light of day, but comes openly forth, I verily believe, to wage war upon us. At the head of several hundred men, all of whom belong to the aristocracy of these lands, he dares to demand an interview with me to present a so-styled *humble* petition, in which his humility goes so far as to state that his loyalty to his sovereign will not permit him and others to obey the will of that sovereign—that, out of the purity of their devotion to the crown they will resist its mandates to the last extremity. The edicts of the late emperor they plead against as being too severe, and destructive to the prosperity of the cities, they wish them to be softened, or rather that the heresy to which they incline may flourish in peace and liberty. They say they will never permit the inquisition to be established, and much more to the same purpose. They come, in short, to present a *humble petition* on the state of the country, or perhaps four hundred men in arms will try to compel a defenceless woman to turn false like themselves to every duty—like them, to renounce conscience and honour! There, gentlemen," concluded the princess, with increasing agitation, that seemed to partake more of the angry mood of her father than of female timidity, "read this paper, and say what it were best to do."

"I see," observed Barlaumont, "these men call themselves the deputies of the nation, but methinks the states did not need their interference. Each town, each province, has its legal representatives in the council."

"But, surely," said Margaret, "you would not in prudence advise the doors of Brussels to be opened to them?"

"Draw bolts, up with the drawbridge, and down with portcullis against them, say I," exclaimed Barlaumont. "Audacious rebels!"

But Margaret turned to her graver adviser, who seemed for a moment lost in thought.

"I advise not this, your grace," said he. "To deny them absolutely would both show our weakness and exasperate their feelings. To receive so large a force, as it appears they muster, within the walls of Brussels, were, perhaps, risking too much. It might comport better with your grace's dignity, and the necessitous state of affairs, to yield so far as to receive a certain number of this self-styled deputation, the closing of the doors against them entirely might be the signal for an instantaneous rising, which your highness has not at present the means of suppressing."

Margaret sighed deeply.

"It is almost in vain to hope that I ever shall have these means. If I were prepared with money and men for resistance, or if I had the power to yield what my conscience might allow me to grant, I should

not know the apprehensions which I confess in my present helpless state assail me.

"Surely," exclaimed Barlaumont, warmly, "among so many of high descent within this country, few will care to stain their escutcheons with the foul crime of treason. If they but see that your highness remains true to yourself, they will remain true even unto death. But I believe not the danger to be half so imminent as you imagine. I believe that a licentious, beggarly portion of the nobility, who have, by their own follies and vices, brought themselves to a state of hopeless, irrevocable ruin, have been glad to vent their private discontent through a political channel, in the hope of retrieving themselves by means as vile as their own characters—have actually sold themselves and their support to the factious Protestant merchants. Such men are to be despised—are objects of contempt and disgust. To fear them could alone confer upon the party and its object any degree of consideration, and I contend that to admit them would be lowering too much your highness's dignity. What need is there of four hundred men, armed to the teeth, as doubtless they will be, to present a petition? This savours more of threat than of humility. Suffer them not to dare so much."

"Nay," said Viglius, "this is taking a rash view of the case. There can be no doubt that all who wish well to this country, whether Catholic or Protestant, find the edicts prejudicial to the welfare of the land, and that the feelings of most men, even in Brussels, will, in some degree, lean towards the pretensions of this Breda and his party. This is the undeniable strength which they really possess, the enlisting so much of public feeling in their favour. I say, what I am sure all the knights will to-morrow repeat—receive them, but receive them with precaution."

"I should rather have been inclined to repulse them altogether," said the princess. "but, at present, I am not prepared to compete with numbers. Of what I feel certain is, that no effort of theirs can ever compel the king, my brother, or myself, to suffer herself to triumph. I know what you would say, president, but I have neither the power nor the will to be as lenient towards the errors of this blinded people as you may think it politically advisable. Moreover, I, like my royal brother, think the physician more kind who heals with the knife, than him who suffers the patient to perish in order that he may avoid inflicting the wound. Enough of this, gentlemen, for the present; I wish to call your attention to another circumstance. An untoward accident has given me most serious alarm. When I last hunted at Gratchhooft, I lost a packet of importance, for it came from Spain—of the utmost importance, at the present crisis, when many wish for nothing so much as a pretence, an excuse to justify, if possible, the designs on which their hearts are bent. This document might prove invaluable to them. It contains private instructions, addressed by the king to me, in his own hand, of a nature that astonished me, and which would allow of much misuse."

The regent paused, but, seeing that neither of her auditors were willing to speak, she resumed—

"I do not see any reason for continuing to make a secret to my friends of that which, perhaps, at this very moment is no longer such to my enemies. The king, whose wisdom and talents are too well known for me to dwell upon them, seems to have exerted both in no ordinary

degree Incredible as it may appear—and perhaps the very fact contains the bitterest reproof to me—his majesty is better informed of what passes in Flanders than I am myself, and had taken the trouble to write out for me a list, containing the name of almost every heretic of any note even amongst the merchants and rich citizens of the towns Not only were their exact situations and opinions described, but even their family history and plans As many great names were noted down as obscure ones—at least, comparatively obscure, although it would appear the latter, in their own stations, are not without importance, no hint was omitted that might assist to guide me in my difficulties

“And did these instructions go so far as to prescribe to your highness any decided proceedings against the parties?” demanded Viglius

The princess looked embarrassed Even to her most confidential councillors she liked not to develop the whole truth It was not more a part of her nature, or training, to repose in any one her entire confidence, than it was that of her brother, or had been that of her father Circumstances, however, governed her, in this instance, as in many others, she felt that frankness might be useful when silence was but too probably puerile After a moment's hesitation, therefore, she proceeded—

“Alas! I am afraid the king indicated but too plainly not only how he thought it advisable for me to act, but also what he himself hoped one day to effect Doubtless, should the parties implicated ever obtain sight of these papers, they will consider themselves fully justified in following out their mischievous designs, they will, perhaps, even allege self-defence as an excuse for rebellion But how to recover them! I have in vain sought them myself, and caused them to be searched for by trusty people They have, perhaps, fallen into the hands of those who may not think it consistent with their safety to deliver them up I dare scarcely think to what account they may be inclined to turn them”

“It seems most likely,” said Barlaumont, “that some one of your grace's train has found this packet, in which case its return can scarcely be doubted”

“I think otherwise,” replied the princess “Sufficient time has elapsed to have allowed of such result if it could have been expected I have, besides, thrown out hints on this subject, guarded, it is true, but such as must have been perfectly intelligible to one who was willing or able to understand me, but all to no purpose, none seemed to be in the slightest degree aware of the circumstance to which I alluded I watched, narrowly, every turn of each countenance, every glance of each eye, and it is my firm conviction that none of those who accompanied me to the chase that day were even conscious of my loss In that quarter, I fear, no hope of recovery can remain”

“Perchance some boor may have stumbled upon it,” observed Barlaumont, “little dreaming of its value or its owner, or it may be kept back by some one until claimed Perhaps the promise of a large recompense would be immediately followed by its restitution”

“Nay,” said Viglius, “that would be impolitic, inasmuch as it would unavoidably give the alarm to the factions, who would certainly possess themselves of it either by stratagem or by violence In either case our apprehensions would be justified”

“You are right,” replied Barlaumont, frankly, “I see at a glance the

inconvenience attending on my suggestion, if they once get possession of this letter, they will print it, and hawk it about through every town and village of the Netherlands."

"It is fearful to think what the consequences may be," said the regent, "if as it seems but too probable, these papers find their way into disloyal hands. It is the doubt, the uncertainty of how much, or how little those whom I must face, and, if possible, guide, in the council to-morrow, know of this affair, that makes me so undecided, and, if the word were seemly in the daughter of Charles V., I might well-nigh say, so timid."

"Certainly, the present situation of affairs is most critical," said Viglius, "and perhaps, in consideration of the commercial interests of the nation, something might be yielded."

"Never will the king stoop to concessions," said Margaret. "No one can forget his memorable words, 'Rather not reign than own heretics for subjects'."

"Alas! madam, if the king give you not better means, how is resistance possible? To yield slowly, gradually——"

"And temporarily you would say, I presume," exclaimed Margaret, warming at the suggestion, "to seem to bend until we gather sufficient strength to rise again, and explain the true meaning of words which prudence and necessity will compel us to couch in a doubtful form. Yes, you are right. If we can but gain time, all may yet be well. By this means we may, at least, delay the struggle until better prepared to meet it, or until succour, coming from Spain, we may—what would be a far greater blessing to this country—crush the malcontents altogether. But, alas!" continued the princess, her voice sinking from its tone of energy to one of comparative despondency, "but alas! are not these vain dreams, with which I am soothing my alarmed spirits? Four hundred armed men will shortly be before the gates of Brussels, and the packet—the all-important papers—the most formidable of all weapons—perhaps, at this very moment, in their hands. These are not circumstances that can give hope or courage!"

"But surely there is nought in them to inspire fear!" exclaimed Barlaumont—"a set of needy adventurers, with perchance, a good name here and there sprinkled amongst them! Then being admitted to the presence of your highness will be sufficient to quell them, but it is an honour they have little deserved and which, in my opinion, should scarcely be awarded them. A handful of doubloons would set such spirits at rest for ever! I cannot, will not believe that a generous soul has enlisted amongst them. Yes, such is my view of the subject, although the president appears so incredulous and grave upon the matter. As to the papers, that is, I will admit, an awkward affair."

"But," said Viglius, "may it not be asserted that they are malicious fabrications, spread about with evil intentions?"

"Excellent!" said the princess, with a pleased smile. "That will do exceedingly well!"

"And it is not yet proved that they have been found, or by whom," added Barlaumont. "The difficulties seem to lessen as we examine them closer, and, were they to increase tenfold, your highness need not quail before them. Nay, I would court them as harbingers of success, for they

would rouse the noble spirit of your lineage in your heart, gracious lady, and you would rise equal to the danger, be it what it might. It were but the greater triumph for one in so helpless a condition as that in which your grace now stands, to effect what other less-gifted princes would require armies to accomplish."

The councillor had touched the right chord. Margaret's eye flashed with pride, and the spirit of her house tinged her sallow cheek with a warmer glow.

"Yes!" she exclaimed, with a smile, "it were indeed a triumph worthy of my father's daughter, if, alone, unassisted, surrounded by traitors, having to oppose a discontented, mutinous multitude, and environed by a thousand difficulties, I could overcome them all, and, like a rock amid the foaming waves, stand unshaken by the tempest. It were much for a woman to accomplish, but the task will assume a yet nobler character when it is remembered for what object it is undertaken and achieved. In the cause of God the weak are strong," continued Margaret, crossing herself devoutly as she rose, a sign that she wished the conference ended. "Well, gentlemen, the council to-morrow will be stormy, but it will serve, at least, to show the true colours of many, and, supported by your energy, Barlaumont, and by the wisdom of your years, president, I doubt not but I will go through it very well. I shall not forget to make a *neuvaine* for those unlucky papers, and, as you say, Viglius, we can, at the worst, find some means of evasion. All means are justifiable when the aim to be attained is a good one."

As the princess concluded, the nobles retired from the cabinet.

"That is one of the favourite maxims of the princess's early teacher, Ignace of Loyola," said Barlaumont, as he descended the broad stairs of the palace, "to which I have often thought she clings but too faithfully."

"He has not the merit of having invented it," replied his aged companion, with a sigh. "if, indeed, it be one. Man must have learnt that secret of evil when he first fell, but I am afraid it is now too late in the day to unteach it to the world."

The associates, having gained the court, ceremoniously took leave of each other, and slowly went their way through opposite gates.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE recent separation of the brothers Van Meeren had completely changed, in the course of a very few days, the habits and pursuits of both, as well as the current of their feelings. Thus lay in the motives that had determined the final step, rather than in the bare fact itself. Paul's affections had hitherto curbed his energy. Thus suddenly freed from the chain that for years had bound him, he at once passed from a comparatively passive into an active existence, which brought the whole power of his mind into play, for not only had the management of their great manufactory solely devolved upon him—Cornelius having pertinaciously adhered to his resolution of giving up affairs altogether—but no sooner did he openly and boldly profess his real sentiments, than he found himself, as might have been expected from the weight given him by his talents and fortune, the centre and hope of a faction. Thus he was

speedily involved in the manifold cares and far-spreading interests of a chief of a party, whilst Cornelius, almost as suddenly renouncing all that had constituted the business and pleasure of his hitherto useful and cheerful existence, slunk to his chimney nook like a frightened rabbit into its burrow

Cornelius was now rarely if ever to be met with in his former haunts Paul, on the contrary, was visible at all hours and places, and nowhere more surely than on the Exchange, where he for the most part spent his morning hours

The Exchange of Antwerp was at that time one of the chief rendezvous of the city Bruges boasted the first and Antwerp the second building of this nature erected in Europe, and Elizabeth of England, keenly alive to the interests of her nation, and ever on the watch to procure for it every advantage possessed by other lands, caused a similar structure to be raised in London, the third devoted to those purposes, which the rapid increase of commerce began to demand It consisted of a low, square building, flanked at the corners by bell-roofed towers In the interior, four wide, open galleries enclosed a spacious court, in the midst of which bubbled a clear fountain Thus, when the weather was fair, the merchants of all nations who met there, either in the way of business or pleasure, could enjoy the free air and the sight of the heavens above, but when, as is more often the case in our northern climates, the former was damp, and the latter overcast, they found a convenient shelter under the galleries

There, if they pleased, they might interweave the golden thread of art with the duller web of commercial speculation for their eyes and minds were constantly refreshed by the best works of foreign as well as native artists which were there exhibited for sale It was not ill calculated thus to foster taste in the rich Our ancestors, indeed, sought as much as in them lay to poetise their life by mixing up with its most serious avocations the blandishments of art and luxury

The hour was at hand which usually cleared the Exchange of all its busy groups Here and there, indeed, an idle or an artist still lingered before a favourite picture, but even they, one by one, disappeared, and the life within gradually gave way to the profound repose of mid-day

Two solitary figures, however, remained, occasionally halting, and again renewing their monotonous walk round the fountain, whose clear bubbling waters accompanied, but did not drown, the murmur of their voices These two men were Paul van Meeren and William Kay The countenance of the former had lost all traces of the gloom that had but a few days before somewhat dulled its expression It seemed now full of determination and life His sallow cheek, and deep set grey eye, lighted up with renewed fire, formed a strong contrast to the fair, mild, and melancholy visage of his friend

"Yes," said Paul, in reply to some previous remark of his companion, "the smallest stone flung into that fountain might impede the play of its waters, thus his weakest ties still interfere with a man's truest impulses Only he who stands alone from choice or chance can be called free"

"You are free now, and ought to be satisfied And yet, Paul, you did not leave what you had long considered your home without pain"

"At the moment, perhaps, but now that the parting is over I am glad My only regret is, that so much bitterness has been mixed up in the cup of our separation Anxiety for the fate of my deluded brother

and innocent niece must fall, at times claim a portion of my thoughts, which I would willingly devote but to one object."

"Why will you anticipate nothing but evil for them? Methinks the wise obscurity in which they enwrap themselves may prove their best shield."

"No, Kay—no! You fall there into a very general and dangerous error. A safe neutrality amongst contending factions is impossible, and, in times like these, for the timorous and the weak—those who will not or cannot resist—there is but one way of escaping persecution, and that is a *timely flight*. You seem to doubt my words, my friend, but, alas! time will show them but too true. If prudence dictates the necessity of flying a country which is disturbed, be the cause of that disturbance war, or intestine trouble, it is doubly necessary in my poor brother's case, for his obstinacy and credulity has caused him to cherish for years, within his bosom, a snake that will sting him to death!"

I, too, have long mistrusted Chivalry," said Kay, "but I understand his interests are so bound up with your brother's family, that they may have much to hope, and nothing to fear from him. Many rumours are afloat on that subject. Your niece's name and his are in every mouth."

"They are false!" said Paul, impatiently, "utterly false!" Margaret, at least, trusts me, although her parents make so light of my counsel. I was cruelly deceived in them—that was a disappointment which I little expected—but in her I am certain of never being deceived.

"It is my turn to fear, Paul, that you fall into a common error," said Kay, with a smile. "You place too much reliance on the young. You think that they cannot cry because they hitherto have lacked temptation, time, or opportunity. You must prepare yourself to encounter much disappointment, in the autumn of your life, that you have not known throughout the long years that lay behind you. On all sides, my poor friend, will you meet with such. I speak not only of your private affections, but in the new course on which you have entered, you know not how many, and how great, will be the defects of your brightest hopes—how numberless the difficulties you will have to encounter."

"Do you think I am not aware of this, and that I enlist myself in the cause of an oppressed religion and country with any view of self-aggrandisement? The *first* who raise the banner of resistance must expect to fall the victims of their temerity. But, like those in a storming party, who first rush to the attack, and fall that others may rise upon their bodies, they perish for the good of their brethren, and their only meed must be the success of those for whom they have broken a path."

"With this desponding view of your own fate, without even one faint hope of personal success, how can you embrace so boldly what seems so poor a chance?"

"I devote myself to my religion and country with the same sort of feeling with which the Roman dashed himself into the gulf, that it might close over his mangled remains. The first Christian martyrs who cheerfully embraced certain destruction that a glorious end might be achieved, and after generations be blessed, must each and all have felt as I feel. Nor do I regret that the allusions of youth do not shed their graceful, delusive tints over my mind. A far brighter and less deceptive glow irradiates it. If I regret youth in any way, it is that I might have better energies to bring to the cause, and a greater sacrifice to make,

for what sacrifice is this, to devote a life nearly spent, the few drops yet lingering in the almost burned-down lamp?"

"The last drops that remain are the most precious," said Kay, pressing the hand of his friend with a sudden impulse of sympathy. "You, of all men, need not lament that you bring not the folly of youth to the task you have embraced; its strength, its energy has never deserted you. I honour and admire your self-devotion. But tell me what can induce you to remain in some measure within your former trammels? Why not break off from all commercial interests? Commerce has of late become rather a source of loss than of gain, and it can but withdraw your thoughts from greater, though more dangerous objects."

"There are many reasons, Kay, for that part of my conduct. You cannot be aware in your sphere of action, which is so completely limited to yourself, although its results are so general, how cruel a blow to hundreds of innocent, helpless beings, is the closing of a fabric. It is, at once withdrawing life itself—that is, all the means of supporting it—and reducing to utter destitution, not only men whom despair may drive to acts that would spread their own misery into a wider circle, but also the women and children who depend upon them. Fear has driven from Antwerp most of the rich and feeble-minded merchants, and thousands of poor destitute victims are wandering about the streets without occupation or food. It now becomes doubly a duty for every man to stand firm at his post. For this reason I keep employed all those who are willing to remain by a Protestant master, affording, at the same time, a refuge to the persecuted poor of my own creed without drawing down upon me attention or malevolence. In this manner, whilst their earthly necessities are relieved, the weal of their souls is not endangered, for most wretched is the man who, by cruel necessity, is compelled to feign a religion he cannot feel,—he must lose all sentiment of honour and truth, and such a one I would no longer trust."

"But," said Kay, "you make proselytes among the people you employ." Confess!

"I *hate* that word," said Paul, "but I will candidly avow that some of the men have adopted my faith, more moved, as I think, by the power of example, than by that of persuasion, which I have scorned to use towards them. I think such a measure would have been, in our respective positions, ungenerous to say the least. No," he added, with a melancholy smile, "I never tried to convince but two individuals very dear to me, and with them I failed!"

"You mean Margaret and myself, Paul. We might both have yielded had we not had as eloquent advisers to counterbalance your power. She in Father Eustace, whose gentle virtues would alone teach one to believe and love the tenets that made him what he is, and I, in the spirit of poetry, through which I breathe. Did I cease to believe in the most poetical of creeds, methinks all would be dead within me—my bright fancies would turn dull—my warm imaginings cold, and my very existence become for ever discoloured. You demand more of me than my reason can yield,—the sunniness of my life."

"Nay, Kay, though I think a sterner faith, far from extinguishing the vividness of fancy, may even give it a loftier flight. I do not feel within me the vocation of an apostle, nor do I wish to persuade you into

martyrdom, so let us suffer the matter to rest there. We, at least, know by experience—what the designing would persuade the world to be either criminal or impossible—that we may esteem and love one another though professing different forms of worship and that is the main point. Father Eustace, though a priest, understands *that*, too. But tolerance is too mild a virtue to bloom easily in the volcanic soil of man's heart; when it is not of a purified and exalted nature. The rude boisterous passions that constantly prompt it to anger rather than to charity—to strife rather than to peace—too often make him choke the heaven-born plant with the weeds of his own rash pride. None can be tolerant but the truly good and the enlightened, but how few—how very few are really so in this world."

"Let us hope," said Kay, "that the time will come when men, warned by the sad examples we are likely to give them, will be content to adore God each after his own fashion, desiring no other bond of union than that of universal love."

"Then will man change his very nature, which is one of oppression. Peace belongs to a better world than this, which preserves its choicest blessing for itself, that we may not cling too much earthward."

"But may not your religion be crushed in its bud?" said Kay, "and after-centuries hear of it but as a traditional heresy that was easily quelled by firm and wise princes? Success, you know, qualifies all things."

"No, no!" said Paul, with energy, "it will not be thus. We have powerful enemies, it is true, but it is the very nature of our faith to be strong in endurance."

"Say, rather," said Kay, "that oppression invariably makes the weak desperate, and that martyrdom has, for stern minds, a secret charm."

"Perhaps you may be right," replied Paul, "then let us say that martyrdom, like that which helped to establish the Christian faith in days of yore, will cause ours to burn with a purer, sterner light."

"There seems but little prospect of your eventual triumph at present," said Kay, thoughtfully. "The lesser nobility have, indeed, been bribed or threatened into taking part with the oppressed, and in their turn may, perhaps, alternately threaten and entreat, but the higher and more powerful nobles seem to watch with neutral indifference the whole of these proceedings."

"Think not so," said Paul. "The king has offended every class equally, and every class will resent in turn. Mistake not the present lull for a real calm. It is but the pause before the storm."

"Maybe. But, Paul, you cannot deny that nothing has yet been done. And there can be no doubt but the Duchess of Parma will force the confederates to content themselves with an evasive answer."

"Possibly, but there are great and wise men in this country who will, in the right time, stand up to protect and guide us. Besides, we are daily gaining strength from its surest source, *union*. The weakest, when in numbers, are strong. It is difficult, from the many, to select particular objects of hatred and punishment, thus there is security as well as strength in numbers. Here in Antwerp, for instance, continued Paul, lowering his voice almost to a whisper as he leant close to his friend, "we have already formed consistories of our creed, among whose members we reckon some of the richest, most influential men of the city, and what is of far

greater moment, men of pure, disinterested zeal. We have elected a set of magistrates of our own—have statutes of our own approving. We are, in short, making every preparation for the eventual struggle that must soon take place.

"I do not understand," said Kay, pensively, "the enthusiasm that gives you energy, for I foresee nought but public disasters and private catastrophes."

"The future will repay this poor country for all it has already suffered, or may have yet to go through."

"Ay," said Kay, "but what once has sunk may never rise again."

"That were indeed a melancholy consideration," answered Paul, "but one which, I confess, my mind cannot embrace."

Here they were interrupted by the appearance of a third personage, who was evidently making towards them. Paul would willingly have avoided him, but the Exchange was otherwise totally deserted and any attempt at evasion, unperceived, became impossible. He and Kay, therefore, advanced to meet our old acquaintance Van Diest, whom age had so lightly touched that his step was as jaunty as ever.

"Well met, my masters," he said, "sad times—sad times—usual greeting now-a-days—bad news everywhere—no good to be fished up in any quarter from the Town Hall to the poorest fishwoman's hut—always the old tune—lamentations everywhere."

"Futh' you do not seem the worse for this general evil. Your health and spirits have never, I verily believe, failed you for the space of an hour the last thirty years I have had the pleasure of knowing you."

"Very true, Master Kay, thank God, my poor body thrives apace, despite all the contrarieties of my spirit, but then, good sir, I ever kept myself free from all personal harm, took no wife in my youth, thought it might prove a trouble in after-life—you see I was right. In times like these, women are sure to get others or themselves into trouble. I have no chick or chicken to care for—not even a fair niece, Master Paul. I bless my stars for that, too. My brother Ghysbicht has been as wise as myself on the chapter of matrimony. I have thus just enough of general sympathy to keep my heart alive, and have escaped all private anxieties."

"It is not like your usual wisdom, however, to show yourself so much abroad, my good friend," said Paul, "to seek converse with all sorts of people, Catholics and Protestants, and to visit everywhere as you do. Where's your vaunted caution? I, for one, you know, am a rank heretic."

"Oh! but," said Van Diest, with a sly smile, putting his forefinger to his nose, "I take care when and where I am seen with certain persons. I take, personally, a share in nothing, I have no opinions of any sort, and surely there can be no harm in seeing and hearing what passes around one."

"The most inoffensive often fall a sacrifice to their own imprudence and the misconstructions of suspicion," said Kay.

"Especially when they meddle with their neighbours' affairs, as you are somewhat too apt to do, Master van Diest," added Paul, with a slight sneer.

"Ah me!" sighed Van Diest, "I cannot withdraw to my chimney nook like a snail within its house, or like your worthy brother within his

back room. What could I do from morning till night? Who would come and tell me how the world wagged without? But, heigh-ho! my masters, how sorely is the world changed since we were first friends! Who would know this poor city of ours now? Then it was when one met of a fine day—as might be this one—‘How do, my gentle sirs, heard the last news? Splendid cargo of spices come in for the Fuggers—a sight to gladden a man’s heart!’—‘What a shipful of white linen was sent this morning to England!’ enough to clothe the whole isle in one sheet of snow!’—‘Did you see the beautiful hangings ordered for Queen Elizabeth? or were you at the banquet given by the Consul of England to the authorities of the town? Many fair golden florins went to the purchase of the Venetian glasses, without speaking of the rich hangings!’ Yes every day had its wonder now it was a newly finished picture of Master Kays, or Master Alost’s—then a masterpiece of the cunning brothers, Van Meerens. Yes, every day had its pomps, its pleasures, its business, its christenings and weddings, its festivities. Oh! how many a gay *fete* do I remember! How easily the money was won, how pleasantly it was spent! And then there were the gay bouts at the ‘Twelve Pleasant Devices’—none happier there than your good brother, Master Paul, except he had some singing and fiddling at his house, but at home or abroad all was gaiety. Do you remember the *fetes* of our guilds, when they marched through the city with streamers flying, fife and tabor playing, the pretty maidens thronging the streets, and making them gay with their bright blue eyes and scarlet petticoats, like flowers in a corn-field in the season? Then was the time when a man who had eyes and ears might have found plenty wherewith to cheer him. But of late years—Alack! alack! When people are grouped together at the corner of a street, it is to watch some poor father dragged from his home on plea of lunacy, his whimpering wife and children filling the streets with their clamorous grief. If the drums are heard to beat, the streamers seen to wave, it is for some bloody execution about to take place. Half the girls are now clad in mourning and seem like sisters of the Penitentiary order, and their eyes are swollen with weeping. Most of the houses are closed, deserted by their rightful owners, whilst none come to fill their places. The wharfs are no longer encumbered with foreign and native ships, and the weightiest freights they carry hence are stores of citizens with their families, eager to transport to other lands their wealth and their industry. Farewells, and leave-takings, either of this land, or of this world—murmurs and complaints—sighs and weepings, are the only sounds that meet the ear. Lucky, indeed, when the crackling of fagots, by which a Christian soul is lighted out of this world, or the creaking of a tree, does not warn one that the fate of a friend is being decided.”

“A gloomy, but a true picture,” said Paul, thoughtfully.

Van Diest, ravished with having possessed himself of the attention of his auditors, continued to pour forth the strain that had proved so successful.

“Now one no longer hears of such or such a happy event in a respected family, as a daughter being born to the Van Meerens, or a fine alliance taking place among our patrician families, such as an Ursel being about to wed a Berchem, but, instead, that honest Master Cornelius Grappeus, the underwriter, one of the cleverest men about town, is undergoing a

painful trial for some foolish rhymes, and that Master Alost is in prison on account of some harmless jest having escaped his masterly pencil. Our friends among the foreigners have disappeared one by one—old Rondinelli, the Florentine—the Sturgeons—the Fuggers—the Welzers—all are gone, flown away in time. Lucky is it for young Ortelius, that under various pretences he keeps away, though it be not an advantage either to his native town or his friends. One cannot drink with a neighbour, and speak, in the thoughtlessness of the moment, one doubtful word, one passing thought, but the neighbour shall prove a traitor, the senseless jest a crime, and the next best servant of the king a judge. One hears such strange stories and news, one never could believe but that the world is turning round. One day one is told that the worshipful Masters van Meeren, who have lived in love and peace together ever since they left the mother's breast, have parted in anger, because Master Paul is grown a heretic, and Master Cornelius a bigot—two of the best, most reasonable men alive. What next, you'll say, my masters? continued Van Diest, related with the smile his words had raised on the lips of his listeners. "Wonders will never cease. The next thing, then, is that my pretty Mistress Margaret, the pride of our town, the fairest, the richest, the wisest little damsel the Scheldt ever saw grow by its banks is going to be thrown, fortune and all, into the arms of a beggarly Spanish clerk, a man of whom no one knows whence he came nor whither he'll go."

"He may go to the devil, who, for aught I know to the contrary, may be his father!" exclaimed Paul, angrily, "before he shall marry a niece of mine! You may tell that, Master van Diest, to whomsoever pleases to spread such evil reports."

"Why, that's everybody," said Van Diest.

"Then tell everybody who speaks of what he knows not, to make less free with other people's names and affairs for the future."

"As you please, Master van Meeren," said Van Diest, somewhat affronted, "as you please—only mark me. Your niece is not the only fun or rich girl of Antwerp who is granted to a Spaniard. The town is full of such. But little do they gain by it, for widowers can lay as good claims to wives' fortunes as husbands, and a man may thus chalk out for himself a new branch of speculation. But I see I ruffle you by these allusions, my good friends, forgive me. The report about Margaret may be false after all. I will lose no time in ascertaining that, however. Times are sadly altered that I should have been so long without seeing my good friend, worthy Master Cornelius, but how to mend them is a matter to puzzle other heads than mine."

"Have you not discovered that secret yet?" inquired Kay, with a smile.

"Why," said Van Diest, throwing into his broad, self-satisfied countenance as grave and important a look as he was able, "I did not mean to infer that I was utterly ignorant of it. I know of a very simple remedy to settle all things in the right way, and bring back old days again."

"Indeed!" said Paul, "and would it be too indiscreet to inquire this simple way of achieving so great a thing?"

"All that would be required is a man of clear, sound sense, unprejudiced, like myself for instance, who would go straight up to King Philip,

and tell him how matters stand—what Antwerp was, and what it now is. That would be quite sufficient, I'll warrant you, and if he were but here in Flanders, I would be that man, Master Paul, I would talk to him for hours on the subject."

"I make no doubt," said Paul, "eloquence is not the least of your merits. But here come those who will, I am afraid, interrupt its flow for the present. My friends Legaru and Sahger, the best ministers of our reformed church, have perceived me, and are coming this way. I must hurry to meet them."

"So must not I," said Van Diest, in great perturbation, his rubicund cheeks losing all colour, and pulling his cap over his brow, he hurried away towards the nearest door, leaving the two friends to encounter the dangerous society which he had the prudence to shun.

OLD WINTER IS COMING

BY JOSEPH ANTHONI, JUN

Old Winter is coming, old Winter so drear,
His heralds, unwelcome, proclaim he is near,
There's a wail on the blast, there are voices that say,
"The spirit of Summer is passing away."

Sweet evening, the balm of thy breezes is o'er,
And bleak is the blast on mountain and moor,
There's shadow and gloom in the depths of the dell,
And the trees of the forest are moaning farewell.

Old Winter is coming, once more to rejoice
In his robings of snow, and his trappings of ice—
The dreariest of despots, who bends to his sway
Sweet sister of Summer, the beautiful day.

Dear evening, with thee no more on the green
In joyance of sport are the villagers seen,
And the music of childhood, in gambols no more,
Is borne on the breeze from the cottager's door.

All silent and chill, not a bird on the bough
Is heard forth to warble his vesper hymn now,
Not a caw from the rook, as he wingeth his flight
O'er meads where are creeping the shadows of night.

Old Winter is coming, old Winter so drear,
His heralds, unwelcome, proclaim he is near,
There's a wail on the blast, there are voices that say,
"The spirit of Summer is passing away."

BULLIES AND HYPOCRITES

BY E P ROWSELL, ESQ

I VIEW with much disfavour certain story-books which I believe are commonly held in great esteem by parents and tutors. The tales contained in them are generally after this order. There are two families, or two little boys, or two little girls, as the case may be. Now, it speedily appeareth that on the one side there is very sad wickedness, a very sorrowful amount of vice and immorality, while, on the other, there is exhibited a degree of virtue and godliness quite delightful to contemplate. And certainly, looking at this fact, regarding the circumstance how very much more estimable than the other is the one family, or little boy, or little girl, it does seem very unfortunate, and excites the reader's decided indignation to find, that the unrighteous parties are sure to be uppermost in the world, they are, at starting, invariably the best off, and while their lot appears to be very comfortable and enviable, the virtuous individuals, on the other hand, seem beset by a continued storm of calamity and misfortune. However, if the youthful peruser of the exciting narrative will only have a little patience, he will see that matters are all set straight in the end, and the positions occupied at the finish by the respective parties are pleasantly regarded by every good little boy or girl. For there comes to pass a most astonishing change: the bad people have a little sunshine at the outset, the bad boy or girl seem at the beginning to be more comfortably circumstanced than the more deserving, but things quickly alter—awful misfortunes after a time fall upon the wicked and crush them straightway, they become very poor and despicable—while the good people, or the pious little boy or girl—oh! what benefits accrue to them through their steadfast continuance in the right path: they become rich in most dazzling degree and such a flood of prosperity pours in upon them at the conclusion of the story, that the juvenile reader, closing the book with tremendous emotion, resolves that most certainly in order that he may become similarly rich, he will on no account be naughty again as long as he lives.

Now this sounds a very pleasant winding up of matters, and accords agreeably with the young reader's notions and wishes, nevertheless, out of such common ending arises this rather important drawback to the narratives in question, namely, that while they profess to present truth in the garb of fiction, while they pretend to furnish correct pictures of what takes place in the world, and to show the consequences ordinarily attending upon different courses of action, they do in reality give us erroneous a notion upon these points as can well be imagined. My dear child, don't be deceived, they seek to delude you in this matter like as they try to cheat you when they present you with a spoonful of jelly in the which there lies treacherously hid a most unpalatable powder. It is not true, that as a natural consequence of their ungodliness, the one family would in a real case become poor, neither is it in accordance with experience that the pious family would, as a necessary result of their piety, become rich. And, furthermore, don't believe that if you are a good child and behave yourself, that if you refrain from asking to be helped a fourth time to apple-tart, or resolutely eschew barley sugar, that without a doubt you

will be blessed when you shall have arrived at manhood with unmeasured wealth. People have no business to deceive you, and, to my notion, it were better to tell you the plain truth at once, and state fairly and openly that virtue may and does bring happiness, but it by no means involves wealth, and that for the most part the people who make large fortunes are certainly not righteous to the backbone.

Now it appears to me that the people who get on best in the world may be divided into two classes—"Bullies" and "Hypocrites"—men who *force* their way and men who *win* their way—neither very estimable characters, but who have important qualifications for achieving successes in this present life, and who wisely (at least in one point of view) refrain from giving a moment's consideration to another. Let us look for a moment at one of the "bullies," and regard his most striking characteristics.

If you will have the goodness to scan those dozen men sitting together, you will almost immediately detect one of them as belonging to the class of bullies. There is something in his look that at once tells you his character. There is a hardness in his eye, an expression of bull-dog determination about his countenance, both clearly indicating a customer who will have his own way if he can, and who will prefer to gain it by forcible methods rather than any other. You hear his voice above every one else's, and he speaks with a resolute and decided air, as though he, having given his opinion, were in the end of the matter, and no one beside must say a word. Should somebody be bold enough to reply in opposition, our friend *glances* upon him, stares at him as though the speaker were giving unmistakable evidences of insanity, and then fixes at him a rejoinder of blunt contradiction, garnished with something like abuse. In fact, in all he does and says, a man of this class seems to intimate that what he wishes shall be carried out, let who may oppose him, and, if resistance be offered, let the opponent look to himself. There is "I *will* have it" on his tongue, in his eye, in his knitted brow, on his firmly-compressed lips, in the manner in which he sits in his chair, in the fashion in which he walks,—he is a "bully," he has no notion of gaining anything pleasantly, what he gets he will get by conquest, he likes fighting for fighting sake, what he wants he'll take, he would prefer snatching it from you to your putting it into his hand, he disdains kindnesses, but gloats over submission. In fact, he is a coarse, rude, selfish, disagreeable brute. I am afraid I am myself falling into something of vulgarity in describing this kind of individual, but really your coarser specimen of bully is so very disgusting an animal, he is such a nuisance, does so much mischief (for, the misfortune is, he does generally get his way, undeserving though he be), that it is a great treat to be able to say a few true words to him, without the chance of being blackguarded in return. Every one triumphs at the downfall of a bully, and there are occasions when he comes down with a run, when, his ordinary acuteness and discrimination having failed him, he has found himself involved in an unpleasant skirmish with a calm, determined individual (not a bully) who knows the right, and sticks to it, and *will not* be put down, who, like David advancing upon the vaunting man of Gath, with the simplest weapons and without the slightest parade, straightway settles him in the quietest and most gentlemanly style.

This is the most disagreeable description of bully. I should, however,

term every man a bully who, although he may not swagger nor talk loudly, always seeks to drive people, and force them to do that which may be agreeable to himself. Some men really seem covertly to threaten you whenever they express an opinion, there is something in the words they use, and in the manner in which they utter them, which seems to say, "There, there, that's enough—that is my opinion, adopt it, or take the consequences." And my belief is, farcical as this may appear, that in reality there is a spirit of this kind more or less raised in the breast of many men when they are engaged in argument. The arbitrariness one occasionally meets with is intolerable, some men look at you as though they would feel much pleasure in tomahawking you on the spot, simply through your venturing to differ with them on a simple point—and these I should term bullies, in fact, I repeat, I should designate every man a bully who has no notion of leading people, but is always for driving them, who, figuratively speaking, has a decided fondness for taking men by the shoulders and making them follow the desired path, who would never win willing obedience, but who glories in enforcing servile submission. All these men are bullies—hateful bullies. Yet it is a fact that they prosper. Their vaunting, commonly speaking, does them service, they force their ungodly way, while timid men fail, and, in a thousand instances, vulgar audacity proudly raises its head and laughs aloud, while true merit, veiled by modesty, lies prostrate in the dust, and weeps in bitter humiliation.

But who is this who, advancing hastily, takes me by the hand, and, with a face radiant with smiles, and expressive of kindest feeling and sincerest gratification, intimates his extreme delight at beholding me, laments the circumstance that so long a time has elapsed since he last saw me, hopes that I have not been ill, trusts, at all events (for he does not wait to hear my reply), that I am well now—that my wife is well and my children, my family generally, and all my friends and acquaintances? Who is this?—Why, reader, this is a man who would cut my throat with a notched clasp-knife—cut my wife's throat, and the throats of my children, if he dared—that is to say, he hates me (to use a genteel expression) through thick and thin, and if he were to look out of his window one morning and see me and my family wending our way in rags and tatters to the workhouse, he having witnessed the spectacle would, I am sure, cause him to eat all the better breakfast. This man, reader, is a hypocrite, a cheat, a vile dissembler who never allows his looks nor his words to be in accordance with his feelings, who really does not know what truth is, who—but it is of no use getting into a passion in my description of the unworthy individual—suffice it to say, that this man, and such as are like unto him, win their way by the entirely opposite method to that pursued by the bullies. Instead of pleasing nobody, they seek to please everybody—they try to make favour with everybody—endeavour to get something out of everybody, but are very cautious not to do anything for any one who cannot make them a most liberal return. They appear in an infinite number of characters, they are religious men to religious men, gay to gay men, gentlemanly to gentlemanly, and blackguardly to blackguardly. They are anything that will suit the purpose—they talk, as it were, to order, they say what it will please those whose good offices they require, to hear, and so they live on, and—hearken unto it, reader, and weep—and prosper! Better men have been

hung at the Old Bailey, and worthier are the greater number of burglars and highwaymen. One looks almost, in comparison, with an eye of favour upon the open desperate villain, such a man at least shows what he is, and you know how to deal with him, but the deep, cold blooded, designing hypocrite, whose every word almost is a lie, who takes advantage of our best feelings to lay traps for us, to whom honesty and sincerity are utterly unknown, who practises every kind of artifice and treachery, who is a deadly enemy in the garb of a true friend, who knows not one spark of kind or generous feeling, who at one moment would, if it suited his purpose, wring your hand, and, in a voice faltering apparently from emotion, say "God bless you," and in the next, if matters altered, would do you a dark and deadly injury without the slightest hesitation—I say this character is, unquestionably, to my mind, to be regarded as ranking many degrees below that of the open and avowed villain.

Yet, I say, this man, to use the common phrase, "gets on." His hypocrisy is useful to him, he gains his ends through it, it enables him to steal up to his objects and clutch them securely. No wonder, then, that there are so many hypocrites—I mean, thorough and skilful hypocrites, not common dissemblers, but men who have made hypocrisy their study, and whose every-day policy is deeply marked with it. No wonder, that though to become a proficient in hypocrisy there must be a lengthened apprenticeship and most diligent application, the advantages accruing from a perfect mastery of the art cause many to give it their earnest attention. It is no use denying facts. The man who succeeds best in this present age is not the most upright or the most religious. The absolute rogue does not prosper, nor never will. The rogue is a fool, unquestionable knavery will always eventually ruin him who practises it. But, reader, there are a great many species of knavery, and, while the palpable will never answer, the unseen and intangible will, in this ungodly world of ours, always bring more profit than will open and straightforward conduct. For example. Two men starting to obtain wealth, the one shrewd, sharp, unscrupulous (taking care, however, never to lower himself in the world's estimation), the other, open, honourable, and conscientious (not caring a jot what the world might do or say, so that he felt something within him speaking approval to his soul)—of these two men, who can doubt which would win the race? The unscrupulous competitor would have the advantage, and the conscientious man be far in the rear. Yet here is the vast comfort, the latter would be, in fact, the winner. He would go through life with a lighter purse, but also with a lighter heart. The bully would be more feared, the hypocrite more smiled on, both would be more successful, and gain more money. But if you come to the question of real and true happiness—oh, I don't need to hear from the minister in the pulpit on which side the advantage would lie! The bully, with his angry looks, the hypocrite, with his smiling countenance—neither is happy, and, indeed, it would be a good exchange for them if they could give all that they have gotten through their unworthy efforts for even a modicum of that pure, bright happiness known only to men altogether their reverse.

VALDARNO, OR, THE ORDEAL OF ART-WORSHIP

A BIOGRAPHY

CHAPTER XIV

THE calm that I experienced at this time was too deep not to be terrible. The cycle of events was tending to place Melissa in my hands, and to invest me with a power to accomplish some plan not yet unveiled, either allied to retribution, or in some way intended to relieve me of the protracted mortification her unsteady love had caused me to endure. For the first time during many years I saw the dawn of liberty, the not distant hour when the remaining links of my leaden chain would drop off, when my heart would pulsate and rebound in freedom—even leap for joy! Then would this earth be a garden, and all that gold whereon I hated to gaze be convertible into the pleasures for whose attainment others toiled so hard. So was the calm that I at first felt succeeded by a turbulence of spirit which made all deem me happy, nay, blessed by an enviable prospect, no less than that of consummated love.

How strangely are the aspects of genius misconstrued by the indifferent, but should only one who loves its possessor be present, they are understood. How was my heart touched when I saw that Giuditte, and she only, was sorrowful at my joy! So lovely a trait of nature affected me to tears, and opened a train of thoughts which might never have transpired in the mere lover, but could not fail to burst through the imagination of the poet. This clear-sightedness of love was my first experience of its vivid truth, and it filled me with deep emotion.

Thus, if new sentiments were awakened, I was sensible of their alliance to poetical rather than to moral nature. Thoughts of this kind, more earnest in the cause of self-consciousness than of the love of her in whom they had a source, congregated within me, and my position in the circle which held me might have formed the centre of a fiction, so strongly my ideas tended to composition, not that of solitary thought on paper, but of the wand which might conduct human beings through the scenes of a living play. A state of mind more perverted from true humanity could not have been, and yet I was disposed to indulge in it. I saw my way into a plot teeming with revenge too refined to be acknowledged, and too sharp not to be felt acutely.

My visit was a prolonged one, and I pursued my scheme to its conclusion. The details I have not the heart to relate. Let it suffice to say, that on the evening of my departure, all measures being arranged according to a given plan, I led Giuditte into the garden that I might hear the last words of her love. We reached the side of waters which bent their course through a valley, as they received from the shaded moon irregular masses of light and shadow, and so skilfully blended that, like the two beings then present, they seemed mutually to enlighten and darken one another. In the distance, the trees looked blackly distinct, but we were visible to each other, for we sat as in a broad bath of chilling light.

"At this hour," said Giuditte, "all nature is so still and lovely, and enjoys such perfect harmony! Not so ourselves, I fear, you seem ever to

have the same dread of joy Why, Adonai, has no kindly star presided at your birth to charm you, in spite of yourself, into affection?"

"You think still that I am a stranger to love?"

"I cannot say, if it exists at all, your love is like that of a sun which has not a companion, and looks for its equal at systems too remote to reach Alas! that you were less in soul, or I were greater!"

"Have I, then, not loved you?"

"Yes! with the cold and protecting affection of the mountain for the flowers within its valley—nothing more."

"No higher love than that have I felt for you?"

"Well, then, what shall I say to bring your love nearer—you have loved me as this fair moonlight does the earth, investing all in beauty, but, alas! bestowing not one warm ray!"

"Ah, my Giuditte, how just is your last expression! Your loveliness is the teacher of peace, not of passion a repose emanates from your presence,—and not the new and bustling life to which love awakens the spirit."

"Should I not then be happy?"

"Would that I could render you so by a return of the blessing you give. But the peace of another affords no peace to love it is only the bledded perturbations of uneasy hearts that can subside into the peace of love Oh! that I had been gifted with an influence over my own fate, it then would have been my lot to aspire, and, like the fluttering zephyr, to drop enraptured on your breast."

"Your words only show that I am unworthy to be yours."

"Not so, dear Giuditte, but the reverse you are too pure to belong to so debased a being. But we are not as we would be, the model of the soul is from afar, emotions are unwilled, and, until they declare themselves, we know not what they are to be."

"Is it only for your own peace, then, that you have thus noticed me?"

"Judge me with mercy! Oh, how can I reply to those searching words? The joys of my heart have been long gone, they were torn from me, snatched away abruptly, and they have left an inward sore Oh! question me not thus, the pursuits of broken hearts are tranquil Have I then stolen away your peace while I sat in its holy shade?"

"If it be peace that you have imbibed, be welcome but I love you too well to believe that you can find peace in the destruction of my happiness."

"Again, how piercing are your words! Once was there a city in which there was much rejoicing desolation swept over it, the walls were thrown down, the palaces dismantled and destroyed, its youth smitten with sudden age Look at it now, and what do you behold? A heap, perhaps great in ruin, but the haunt of silence, the shelter of timid peace Even as is that city, so am I."

"I know it—I know it well!" she replied, with impassioned and fine expression, and, linking her arms in one of mine, with her fair hands clasped, and placing her loving cheek on my shoulder, she continued mildly "Are there not some, Adonai, who prefer, even before paradise itself, to wander amid the ruins of such a past?"

"They may love it," said I, "and they find no resistance, they are welcome, even as you are welcome now to all that remains of me But whether they roam for meditation, or for sorrow's sake, the desolations

make no reply to their touching regard, immovable, save in their decay, they manifest only a solemn warning—visited or not, indeed they are the same.

“And why are you so like the unfeeling thing you thus describe?”

“You shall know shortly,” was my reply. “Ask me no more.”

“Oh, Adonai! tell me at this very hour! I feel as if my nature were changing,—passing from an old into a new birth, and that I may demand of you things which, before seeing you, were unknown to my very thoughts. Tell me why you are thus cold to me, to the ardent love you have kindled within me, and not watch my love as if it were the mere lightning of a summer sky!”

“I watch it with interest and regret.”

“Oh! tell me the history of griefs which exercise this fatal influence on a heart so young and noble. What has blighted you thus that you cannot smile without effort—that your laughter is mockery? Oh, Adonai! have you then suffered for another—are you really broken-hearted at this fresh period of your age? If you believe that I love you, tell me whom you have loved, and what the anguish is that you have gone through.”

“The knowledge that you seek, Giuditte, is prepared for you, all shall you know, but it must be in company with that other, and in the presence of the world.”

“So let it be,” she replied, “though I had hoped it would have been told me in privacy.”

As she spoke her voice died away, and she sank unexpectedly upon her knees as if exhausted by long-sustained emotion. In part owing to absence of mind, I gazed unmoved on her uplifted eyes. At that moment she felt her loneliness, no sign of sympathy from me while thus she was prostrated by unrequited love. Her head dropped, she clung to my knees and wept, I heard, as a deserved curse upon me, those loud and sobbing accents which are uttered by forsaken misery alone. Hoping, she realised no hope, the future seemed, by some dread act, to have extinguished its advent, the present to be too heavily laden to advance. As she wept, her hair was loosened, and hurled over her shoulders by the mighty sob. I was affrighted at the cruelty of my work, my icy fabric melted. I raised her, and she fell into my arms with a convulsive cry. As I held thus the beauty and purity of an angel in my embrace I thought of Melissa, and tried to forgive the past, in vain, but though thus unreconciled I clasped Giuditte to my breast, whereon she continued to weep.

The night then came, it was chilly, dark, and tempestuous. The wind had risen, it passed in noisy billows over the earth, its moanings seemed to issue from the vinty sepulchres of creation, tombs which spread further to the east and to the west than the cemeteries of man, their monuments the barren rocks and the deserts, and over whose spoils the blasted and leafless forest sheds the sorrowing recollection. The night was terrible, and thunder commanded the storm.

“Early on the morrow,” I said, as we entered the villa, recovering resolution to carry my purpose into effect, “it is decided that I am to quit Siena. This evening there is a midnight mass at the cathedral. If you would know my secret, what I have suffered, and for whom, if you would meet me once more let it be there, but come not without Melissa, and keep silence.”

"Ever loved of earth! I will be there"

She promised, and we parted.

Thanatos met me at the door, when I said "Have the eunuchs arrived from the Sistina chapel at Rome?"

"They have," was his reply

"Have the priests received them at the cathedral graciously, and accepted the golden offering?"

"All has been according to your pleasure," answered Thanatos

After giving orders respecting my departure at the conclusion of the mass, I retired, and remaining in my private apartment until the time approached for the service, I walked to the sanctuary. At midnight the carriage of the Duchess of Valisneri had arrived, and she with Giuditte had entered the dark cathedral. As they trod the aisle the dome became suddenly a blaze of light, and the silence was taken possession of and almost filled by a voice whose tone was unlike the human, so sweet and soft, so clear, so familiar with the almost boundless spaces of the church. It seemed like a servant of harmony sent forth by the immortal Palestrina to touch the heart, and render that a silence. Having done its task it was overtaken by a hundred voices as little human as itself. The "Miserere" was their theme, that anthem of the wretched, the mourner, the sufferer. Though those who sang expressed woes which they did not experience, the hearers felt the power of music, and all who attended were soon in tears—a never-failing effect even on the most frivolous and earthly-minded. Melissa and Giuditte sobbed aloud. As the union of voices swept the dome the desolating effect touched their bosoms, which heaved and fell like living waves breaking gently on the shores of eternity. It might be seen that all the vanity of their life was dissolving into the deep repentance uttered through the means of sacred music. They at times recovered themselves and conversed on the wonderful sounds, and were again affected, if possible, more deeply than before. It was what I foresaw, and, unable to restrain myself any longer, I walked to the spot where they stood, touched not less than they by the overpowering harmony. I made a sign to them to follow me, which they obeyed like children, astonished and trembling. I led the way to a small chapel which belonged to the Ferrini family, it was lighted brilliantly, and in the midst of it, wrought in ivory and gold, was placed a figure of the crucified Redeemer, that Cellini had executed for me—a work which would have made Phidias admire and grieve.

"Come, my sisters," I said, "come hither, and look upon this marvellous representation."

At the moment that they reached the chapel, and saw the figure, the music changed. It was no longer expressive of penitence, but of pain—the thorny load of sin. The one voice only was heard, and as if near,—for it seemed to issue in the language of the crucifixion, the well-known exclamation of bitterness, at the Saviour's lips. Those who were close at hand thought for a moment that the figure was actually the seat of that awful pang which once extinguished the Divine heart, that it then expressed the suffering of that most bitter hour.

"Look at the Saviour!" said I, earnestly, but calmly, as I took Giuditte's hand in mine. While I spoke, the eyes of Melissa pierced my countenance. She seemed ready to fall on the pavement, as if with feminine quickness, she had read at a glance my deliberate and unfor-

giving reproaches, but I did not heed her. Addressing myself still only to Giuditta, deeply affected, at the same time, with the remembrance of all,—my face told of agony not less true than that expressed on the sculptured figure before us,—agony such as an artist might have modelled from to tell that same story of the Divine passion over again.

"Look!" said I. "In that image, so expressive of all the agony of mind which man can endure, you may behold what I promised to reveal—how much I have suffered for another!"

The mass was finished, the crowd moved away, and I was lost in its multitudes.

CHAPTER XV

My Calabrian page, Mezzofonte, and Thanatos, were in attendance with horses at the cathedral doors, in pursuance of my commands. Mounting my steed, I took an abrupt leave of Siena. The music had just ceased to pour forth its concluding tones, while conscience vibrated to the shock of its silence. The pavement, however, soon responded to the hoofs with sounds of freedom, which, accompanied by the snorting of our noble beasts, gave me relief from the yet-remembered mass and the highly-wrought emotion which had been attendant on its solemn celebration. The air was fresh after the storm, the sky clear. For the first time for many years my breast grew light, and became susceptible of pleasurable sensations. As we gaily rode along, the stillness of the night was relieved by Mezzofonte, who chanted his native airs, the sounds of which were echoed by the hills, and Thanatos occasionally joined in the gay song, or in turn sang the airs of Greece, to which his deep voice gave an effect which was very pleasing. All night we travelled over mountain and vale, and not until long after dawn reached the villa of the Duke of Savatelli, where I had engaged to pass some days. Meantime, I seemed to have left all care behind, the world looked a theatre of new enjoyment. There is a lightness of the spirit, a mild and exalted gladness, which occupies the same range as imagination itself, without its glow—a contentment in companionship with an enlarged present running evenly into the past and future alike. It is associated, nevertheless, with a retrospect of what has been, but the troubles of the past, as if stilled by a hand more potent than reason, stand apart, assented to and explained. All this I felt, and love, once so absorbing, seemed a light dream like a flower whose agitated petals were frosted over, and reflected no burning rays. He who feels thus appears to himself to be a visitant of scenes which have the forms, but not the meaning of old.

While thus musing, and some time after having left Siena behind, my attention was of a sudden excited by the outpourings of a loud, rich voice in our rear. The last song of our party was ended, and an interval of silence was succeeded by the sounds in question. On turning our heads, we could just discern a mounted figure riding slowly after, and too much absorbed in his own concerns to heed us. His voice was so distinct that scarcely a word of it escaped our ears, and it was soon evident that his chanting was in honour of the illustrious composer to whom the mass we had that night attended was due—a proof that the stranger, also, had been at the cathedral, and had heard the unrivalled music. Between every verse that he sang he observed a pause, as if to consider what ought to follow.

We rode slowly over the turf, while, in a voice seeming to reach the sky, the eulogy of Palestrina was poured forth in these words

The gust of harmony was let to blow,
And died too soon on the regretful ear
Oh! ask of Heaven whence tones thus wondrous flow,
She'll answer, "Pray, such sounds to ever hear"

Thou, Palestrina, hast that home above,
Thy graces mild and high as yonder star,
Thy native melody, so full of love,
Descending on our hearts as from afar

The happy sounds a future state betray,
And urge the soul of clay to upward rise
When earth's last silence hurries us away
Shall strains be heard like these in paradise!

Meantime, let human sorrow heed thy song
Smiles it attunes to sadness, tears to mirth,
Its track the voice of man shall chime along,
Though mortals cease to wonder at thy birth

Thy mission to relieve this aching breast,
We breathe with thee an atmosphere divine,
And, while escorted to the sacred fane,
Each grateful soul accordant lives with thine

A star burns on the vest of Duty
Such monument can suffer no decay!
It is thy glory kindled in the sky,
Where notes of flight unearthly music play

The traveller's pace was yet slower than our own. He had ceased to sing, and we were not disposed to interrupt, by the renewal of our own songs, the meditative mood that we had fallen into. I rode on, sometimes forgetful that the stranger followed, sometimes more mindful of it than could be explained. Towards daybreak we reached the villa of Savatelli, and, without much delay, were admitted. I dismounted, and was conducted into the house. On passing a window which overlooked the court-yard, I was startled at seeing the person who had ridden in our track enter the open gate, his face muffled up as before, so as to hide his features. He led his beautiful horse aslant the yard into the stable, and disappeared. I retired to rest, but the image of the horseman continued to be present before my inward eyes, accompanied me into my light slumbers, and the first inquiry I made in the morning was concerning him, but I only received for answer that, besides ourselves, no one had arrived. On hearing this, I experienced an uneasiness almost impossible to describe.

My sister was at the villa. I saw her at a late hour in the morning, when we had a joyful meeting. I had slept soundly until noon. Angela was always happy when with me, and, at the house of our relative, we were able to pass the hours as we pleased, until evening came, when the strictest ceremony was observable throughout the mansion. The duke himself said little, but did much, for his greatness never flagged an instant, and it demands no slight effort to be always grand. The duke was gratified at my arrival, for on the same night there was a ball, and it was attended by the great families of Volterra and its vicinity. Angela and I were present when the guests, who were gracefully received by Theonoe, began to arrive. Amongst us was Ihanatos, who, as my secretary, was entitled to be there. Many a wife came alone, her car-

riage, horses, domestics, formed a glittering equipage, while she only sat within. Many were ready to do her homage, but the one whom the affections dwelt on, accompanied her not, his part was reserved for the stranger.

Little as I entered society, its duties descended lightly upon me. All that I said was assented to, a word or two from me was listened to with unmerited attention, and repeated as soon as I appeared out of hearing. But I had the ear and the curiosity of a woman, nothing escaping my notice, though I did not appear to attend to anything that passed. I was amused by the dresses and manners of the party, though manifesting neither interest nor indifference in those who were present. Many were decorated with golden chains who had no other gold, and in glittering vests and gems who shone not otherwise, and in satins who in all other respects were harsh and unpolished.

"I expected our friend Angus here this morning from Rome," said Savatelli.

"And I shall not forgive him for not keeping his promise," added Theonoe.

"Angus" replied I, "then he has been already here. It was he, his voice is now familiar to me, though it be only in recollection. How is it that I recognised it not at the time? I might have known it then, for twice before has he overtaken me on that road, and, strange as it is, that it did not suggest itself at the moment, I have now no doubt that he has done so a third time."

"Signor Angus is in the house, and will soon be present" said a man in waiting, and scarce had he spoken when the individual in question entered. He looked well and in spirits. Theonoe and the duke received him warmly.

"Were you at Siena last night?" I said, waiting till he approached me, which he soon did with delightful cordiality.

"Yes," said Angus, "I heard at Rome that there was to be a grand mass of Palestrina's performed there, so I stopped on my road to hear it. I believe that we were within hearing of each other all night, at least, I learn so from the grooms."

With what different views, thought I, did we attend to the grand celebration!

"We were talking of you at the moment you entered. Aulæ said that you must have arrived at daybreak, though why he thinks so I do not exactly know," said the duke.

"He is right," replied Angus. "I followed him through the gates, and remained with my horse for an hour in the stable. I then went out again, and lost myself among your peasantry, and many curious things they told me, which neither you nor I were aware of before."

"Though I missed your companionship, I heard your beautiful hymn to Palestrina," said I.

"Could you hear that?" replied Angus, laughing, "the night certainly was very still. I composed it as I rode along, and sang aloud to try its merit by the ear."

Before we parted the next day, I had much conversation with Angus, but not of a satisfactory kind, in any one respect, though we talked of many things. The reason was, that our minds were pitched in different keys, his spirits ran high again like upper currents in the air, mine grovelled over the surface of the earth like a vapour. I could not take in his enlightened joy. He was full of a projected scheme, which he

hoped to accomplish should his life prove long, that of visiting every place of interest in the known world. I wished him to go home with me, but he declined. We were to meet, he said, from time to time with increased pleasure, at present, we both knew but little, and had done nothing, we, therefore, could be of no use to each other.

Such were the views of this strange man, and I felt their force, so little did I desire to open my heart to him at that moment.

Antinori was among the guests staying at the house, and seemed to be under the especial care of Theonoe. Several others of the Palleschi party were there too for the contest was ripening, and the duke, above all men, abhorred the existing order of things.

Thanatos, as usual, shunned the women, though the graceful Theonoe herself deigned to address him, he avowed an abhorrence of them all, they were beneath the care of an intellectual being, and such he assumed himself to be. He was deeply engaged in conversing with Orazio, and I often found their eyes directed towards me, but they did not observe that I saw their looks. I learned almost as much by watching as if I had heard them, and when they regarded me, I closed my eyes and opened them in another direction. My suspicions, once awakened, never slept, and Thanatos, as well as Orazio, had become their unceasing object. The latter I had met coldly, and he seemed to feel the slight. As the music continued to flow, the spirit of dance was more diffused, the love notes grew louder, and when words had said all that they dared express, eyes took up the theme, and glance told to glance even more than lips could have repeated.

And now, these amusements ended, there was a breaking up, a general confusion and dispersion. Smiling nods were seen from shawl-covered heads, sighing and burning farewells were heard from maidens unwillingly dragged along at the arms of unfeeling brothers, and fascinating looks distinguished solitary old damsels, while they awaited the announcement of their carriages. I descended the staircase to the hall, where I remained until the visitors had left, and employed myself in examining the frescoes, which were remarkable.

Yet at this time, painful as my reflections might have been, I was less occupied with Orazio's wickedness than with my own peaceful state of mind. How to explain it I scarce know, but all my late sympathies and horrors were alike lulled, and the past seemed to return upon me divested of its evils. There are no doubt many periods exempt from care in the intervals of trouble, did we but heed them, but they escape us. Let a quiet chord of memory, while in this state, be accidentally touched, and a whole train of former feelings is awakened, not in the same intensity as at the first, but, like an old and well-preserved picture, softened and mellowed by long repose. And if there have been a period of oblivion, brief though its duration, between the time when first and last that feeling came, its resurrection may recal days long past, as if all that happens had some associate but far back type amid olden records of memory, records which, unwilling to be often disturbed, have founded for themselves ancestral resting-places within the first inhabited regions of the soul. He who has studied the antiquity, as well as the immortality of the spirit, will feel these truths, he will remember that a breeze, a flower, a melody, will awaken emotion so old, that he has forgotten what it once was and to what it belonged, and before he can trace it home, it has sunk away into its mysterious repose.

The day after the ball I was seated in the study alone, listless and motionless. I was in that state of profound calm which seems to render existence itself incompatible with disquiet. Suddenly the sounds of a lute reached me, they entwined themselves round my soul, and carried me back to a period of time which appeared long antecedent to my earthly being.

A pre-existent sympathy was awakened, I felt a retrospective longing, a hope directed back into the past eternity, as if my essence had once been its companion. But it was soon over and my soul afterwards wandered in vain amid the wastes of time to find news of its ancient home.

I approached the window and saw an aged minstrel, no sooner did he look up and repeat his melody than the strange emotion revived. But now, Angela and the musician were united in the feeling, and still it was one of time-hallowed peace. I seemed, during the momentary trance, to know the man well, who thus appeared associated in my mind with my sister. He changed the melody, the new air transported me to later times, it was one that Angela and Orazio had been wont to sing, and it recalled to my memory that Moro had once sung the first, in search of whose origin I had ranged through ages.

These are states of mind which, as it were, hallowed by the antiquity within us, assure us of a ceaseless career, and embrace more of the feeling of immortality than is awakened by reason or sudden emotion. They are like glimpses which, by the affinity of newer feelings, are caught through the darkness of the dead sea of passion, over whose undisturbed surface souls have a right to wander after death, and find that ancient peace which in life they only knew in day-dreams like these.

I was impelled to approach the minstrel whose clear and melancholy voice had thus vibrated through me. I opened the window, and, as I drew near to him, he threw back a disguise, and flung his lyre behind him. It was the pale and ghastly Moro.

"Oh, prince," said he, quite calmly, "you, too, have injured me. Tell me what I have done to merit persecution at your hands? I was happy, my lot was enviable, when accident led you to adopt me into a station of life ill becoming my birth, but assorting well with my feelings. You gave me many things even dress and money, that I might make an appearance in society, you induced me to aspire to the favours of a princess, your lovely sister. Was I to blame because I had the spirit to respond to such summons? You invited me to your magnificent castle, on my road to which, as if at once to dispel all my illusions, I was stabbed. I fell, thinking of your sister's beauty, for her image had burned itself into my soul. However, you did not desert me then, but showed sympathy for my misfortune. You visited my couch with compassionate looks, you promised to avenge me. After a brief delay, during which I suffered twofold martyrdom, jealousy, and the desire of revenge, you tracked the murderers to their hiding-place, and found them there. What am I to think now? Be your discovery what it may, you conceal it from me and my associates. The only friends I possess in the world have waited on you, but in vain, to learn it, and I have dragged my own weak and bleeding body to your castle to implore of you the justice which is due, and you have fled from me, as from a ghostly enemy."

"Know you the man who struck you?"

"I know his employer."

"Who is that man?"

"His name and recent marriage are perfectly familiar to you"

"Oh, God! merciful and neglected! why thus unjustly am I fated to endure this kind of suffering? I could easily bear the penalty of my own misdeeds, but my present trial, which puts in the balance a sister's fate, deprives me of all faith in Thy providence. Should I betray this brother's crime and hasten an innocent sister to the goal of her misfortunes? Wretch, begone! The sternest would fail under such a trial."

"Tremble not for your brother," said Moro, "he does not care for you"

"How so?—speak out"

"He secretly reports that you employed the assassin"

"I!—say you truly?"

"As I am a believer, I do"

"What do you think yourself about it?—tell me quickly. The surprise I feel so affects me, I cannot rebut the charge"

"My benefactor!—such I still deem you, for such would you have been—Orazio Pallavicini is the murderer, not you"

"He is! I heard it from the throats of his hirelings!"

"I believe you with a firm faith, and on your authority, since justice herself is too slow to act through her legal instruments for the benefit of a dying man. I will myself assume her service and do her behests. The criminal is here, I go to the arrest, the execution——"

"Stay! depart not yet—I am able now to reflect. Owing to my past thoughtlessness and imprudence, you appear to have been the victim of Orazio's jealousy and your own love. These passions I excited in your breasts unprovokedly—be it mine to meet the consequences. That you should have loved my sister I lament bitterly, but, for this misfortune, I can now make you no compensation beyond adopting you as a brother, that you should have been murdered on account of such love, I solemnly mourn, and will avenge it"

"Impossible you are not in earnest as I am, I live for nothing else"

"How? Not in earnest when I have pledged my word?"

"Your scruples must revive,—I have none to arrest my arm"

"What would you do?"

I sentence him to instant death"

"Death!"

"I knew you could not inflict it—farewell"

"Nay, stay awhile"

Let go your hold, or I strike now"

Stay! in his breast palpitates my sister's heart—can you not feel pity?"

"No! I yet would tear him from her"

"No human mercy remains in thy heart! Would that I could teach thee the mercy which reigns above!"

"Name it—for the hour is come"

"The charity of Jesus"

"How well I knew it, felt it—yes, as you feel it now. It was taught me across the cradle by my mother, the mainstay of whose poverty it was on earth, and she reaps its reward in heaven—perhaps at this moment watches me thence! Thanks to her holy influence, it has softened me in many little sorrows, recalled me to myself after quarrels with friends, and made me amiable sooner than I deserved. Yet now, while I shed tears

at the recollection, and can scarce find utterance, I cast its example from me, in my impatience, spurn it as I do the shackles of the law! Oh, brother! I glory in the hope of perdition, if it be gained by a vengeance precious as this man's death is to my soul."

"Reflect, for your mother's sake! Would you not meet her above and forget all?"

"Let go your hold once more!"

"Then listen! You have alarmed me more than I can express, yet have you conquered me! Your resolution assumes an aspect so frightful in my eyes that, with cowardice still in my heart, I resolve to rescue you from a sin so surely fatal to you! Compose your spirit while yet you live! I adopt your revenge!"

"Say it again!"

"Can I pause? The inevitable encompasses me! Behold, then, I give you the pledge again!"

Moro leapt into the air and uttered a delirious shout of thanksgiving as I said those words, then, in an instant, turned deadly pale and fell upon my breast, panting horribly. My hand was in his gripe, he looked up at the sky, and by an imploring glance signified to me to do the same.

"Do you see Him?" he said.

"I do," replied I, fully conscious of his meaning.

"Are we together at this moment in His presence?"

"We are!"

At these last words the gripe of his hand increased to a degree which made me sensible of his agony—it was the death struggle, intertwined in the serpent-folds of revenge! Yet it was peace to him: he had buried his vengeance alive in a survivor's breast. He was, indeed, calm again for a few moments, and with a resignation worthy of a better cause, he took a list and somewhat lingering look at his Creator, in whose presence he had sworn me to be merciless, and was a heavy corpse in my arms.

My prevailing emotion at the sudden death of Moro was naturally one of horror, but it was not free from a mixture of satisfaction, as if, on thus becoming quit of a troublesome acquaintance, the responsibility attached to my oath had lapsed. Vain thought! How little did it do justice to my nature! It was but of transient duration, however, the low motive, even in the lofty mind, being often the first of many to intrude itself on the understanding. It providentially happens that in those who are susceptible of better feelings, all other motives—and among them the highest—come forward in turn, and when the sense of right has reached the ascendant, a shock at the baseness of preceding impulses is not unknown.

This, then, was the harmless being whom, in my moral panic, I had dreaded to face—'armless, because death-stricken!' Yet, how awful was his thirst of blood! And he died happy, only, when he had transplanted his green and sturdy hued to the heart of another! I felt its deep roots strike into me, as into a soil suited to nourish it. Was it to ripen there when, by nature's law, it should have perished in its then lifeless home? Aroused to a better state of mind by this event, my recent conduct at Siena appeared detestable to me—the vanishing sweetness of my own poor revenge against Melissa, while its recollection compelled me, despite myself, to make allowance for Moro's more justifiable hate—failed to any longer satisfy me—it rather, indeed, bore me meditate on the sins of many days, above all, on my seduction of Giuditta.

Yes—I had seduced her! Not the frail body which I respected, and

falsely believed myself incapable even in thought of dedicating to pollution—not the body, still strong in innocency as in beauty—but that centre of human truth and love, the soul! That had I seduced from the ways of peace, and had deemed that it would tell no tale I found it revelling in careless joys like a dolphin on the sea-foam top, I left it panting on the lone beach by the rock-side, no prospect but the expanse of gladness it had leapt from, never to return How wretched was I! But deserving what I suffered, I had not even the comfort to feel that my misery would be a relief to Giuditta's heart! She had become forlorn as the truly fallen, cold to shame as the despised of women, for aloud among the houses which had sheltered her during spiritual innocence, she proclaimed in the words, though not in the voice, of the harlot, that she could love no more, nor wed! New life had been kindled within her, she nurtured at her virgin breast the infant Sorrow! And she vowed, blest saint, to rear it, and dedicate it in her arms to God

Short as my visit was at the villa of Savatelli, I had time to discover that my sister already partook of her father's destiny in marriage, and was unhappy But she was ready at a moment's notice to be happy again, was happy still at the sight of a smile, at the sound of an affectionate word She knew her husband's faults, though not his crime, and she learned them with daily forgiveness, while her grief, the slow sorrow of one believing herself useless to the man she loved, was perennial

A letter reached me in due course after my return to Aul. It was from Giuditta It was full of meaning applicable not only to me, but to those whom I had ever thought of most It had a meaning for my poor father's fate, whose last hours were still as a present time within my memory, it had a meaning for Dione! It had a meaning for Angela, whose lot I continued to dwell on as though it were a part of mine! The sentiment which that letter breathed, the words it expressed, had already been self-uttered one by one in all our hearts, it had a meaning for us all

"Yes," wrote Giuditta, "thou hast spoken the truth aloud in the temple of God, in the presence of man, and hast made me its sacred depository"

"Oh, it was confidence—and that reposed in me!"

"Not a whisper of it shall be heard again, not a syllable divined my thoughts mourn and pray over it through the quiet of the night then may the delirious tongue mutter, out of the abundance of revelation, those secrets which the heart loves best!"

"Thou hast taught me the one truth of religion, the grand object of revelation, which is the sacrifice of one for another!"

"Thou hast suffered for another I am thy chosen witness, and am appointed in my turn to suffer for thee! So shall grace be diffused, so the offering-up of love become a successive sacrifice, and take the circuit of the poor in spirit

"Thou hast adorned me, not with thy affection, but with thy sorrow! Mine then be thy troubles past and to come—they are upon me, let me bear them, then, until thou art related by perfect love, as thou wilt be, to one in whose heart the blood of the Redeemer flows"

What did these last words mean? But I could endure no more

That letter is worn out! For years I wore it next my heart, wore it to rags, and one by one the shreds were lost And I knew it by heart, repeating it in hourly mutterings as I pressed the tattered remnants to that memory of the soul

